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AMONG MY BOOKS

CENTENARIES, REVIEWS, MEMOIRS

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AMONG MY BOOKS

CENTENARIES, REVIEWS
MEMOIRS

BY

FREDERIC HARRISON

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O.M.

1865–1912

NOTE

THIS volume collects studies in general literature of the present year, and some reviews and memoirs of recent date.

The first six Chapters, entitled "Among My Books," were contributed to *The English Review*, 1911-1912, as was the review of the *Life of Ruskin* (Chap. XVII.).

The following Chapters appear for the first time :— In Part I., Chap. VII., *The Homeric Problem*; Chap. VIII., *A Lecture on Homer*; Chap. IX., *On the Attic Drama* and the *Comic Drama*; Chap. XI., a review of Professor Bury's new volume, *The Eastern Roman Empire.*

In Part II. the following essays are new :—Chap. XII., *Chatham and the American Colonies*; Chap. XIII., *Rosebery's "Chatham"* (partly from the *Daily Chronicle*); Chap. XIV., *Von Ruville's "Chatham."*

Chap. X., *Byzantine History*, is a new edition of the Rede Lecture at Cambridge, 1900.

Chap. XV., *The Centenary of Tennyson*; Chap. XVI., *Thysia*; Chap. XIX., *Rodin*; Chap. XXI.,

My Reisebilder, were all contributed to the *Nineteenth Century*, 1908-12.

Chap. XVIII., *Charles Eliot Norton*; and Chap. XXII., *Professor Firth's "Cromwell,"* appeared in the *Cornhill Magazine*.

Chap. XX., *Centenaries*; Chap. XXIII., *Two Coronations*; Chap. XXV., *The London Library*, appeared in *The Times*, 1909-11.

I have to thank the proprietors and editors of these above-named publications for their courtesy in enabling me to use these pieces.

Chap. XXVI., *The Positivist Library*, is a new edition of the book privately printed by myself for the use of the Society at Newton Hall in 1886.

F. H.

Hawkhurst, *August* 1912.

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PART I

CHAPTER I

ANCIENT POETRY

Said Royer-Collard in his old age, "*Je ne lis plus, je relis.*" I, too, have reached that tranquil time of life; and no time and no practice can be more welcome to any reading man. I am now, by the passing of years, a man of leisure, for I have no pressing task to complete, at least none that the busy world would care to notice. So I rest in my library and take from its shelf now this, now that well-worn volume, dip into its pages, and turn to many an unforgotten verse or passage—and, ah me!—too often do I light upon a glorious burst of poetry, a fragrant saying, a humorous thought, which had long slipped out of memory, even indeed if it had ever reached my mind at all.

I had never been a great reader, for I have always had too many things to do and too varied interests to allow much time for serious reading. I often notice that hard workers and even versatile writers may be said to *refer* to books, to use books, rather than to read them from cover to cover. Nor have I a large library, for I never bought a book because others bought it, much less because it was "rare," or costly, or famous. The few thousand books I keep on my shelves have been invariably chosen because I wanted

to have them at hand, and many of them have been presented to me by the authors, and bear their inscription. And I may add, without boasting, that at one time or other I have read them, or as much as I needed to read. And now, as a hermit in the Weald, I turn to them again and again.

How I pity the restless people who want the last book out, and worry till they can get sight of some ephemeral tale that they will forget the very name of to-morrow. These Danaids are for ever doomed to fill their little pitchers with a stream of printer's ink which runs out at the bottom, and a dull and unwholesome fluid it is. What pure draughts, fresh from the Pierian spring, are all the while at hand, if they would but open the poor old standard books, as they call them, of which they know nothing but the name. These prodigals are fain to fill themselves with husks that the swine eat, when they should arise and go home to sup off the fatted calf.

Of late it has amused me to catalogue the working part of my library; and a catalogue makes books to stand cheek by jowl in alphabetic order, and in any modest book store they must stand in order of size rather than of subject. My library, moderate as it seems, is decidedly miscellaneous. It excludes nothing, from Lagrange on *Analytic Functions* to *Pickwick*. There is no particular study in which I pretend to be "an expert"; and, indeed, I am a sworn foe to "specialism" of any sort. My favourite "period" in history is that which extends from B.C. 50,000 to A.D. 1912, and I feel the thrill of supreme art in a chorus of Æschylus as in *Tom Jones*. Since my reading is thus miscellaneous, and my tastes in literature, to say the least, somewhat promiscuous, the books on my shelves have to put up with strange bedfellows. I trust that none of them are what the

French call *mauvais coucheurs*, or there would be shrewd knocks, for the exigences of space force one to place incongruous tomes on the same shelf. My quarto *Rabelais* is near my quarto *Imitation* (1658) in old Corneille's verse. Hobbes' *Leviathan* jostles Lord Lovelace's privately printed *Astarte*. The *Pilgrim's Progress* (facsimile of 1678) stands between Cardinal Newman's *Apologia* and Haeckel's *History of Creation*. And Mr. Arthur J. Balfour's *Creed* has for supporters the Suras of the *Koran* and the "*Sayings*" of Confucius. The books are a somewhat mixed company, and I often take them down from their shelves in a desultory way.

What joys, what memories, and yet what searchings of heart, rise up as one turns from book to book. Here are the school classics wherein, some sixty-five years ago, I first hammered out my *Iliad* or my *Agamemnon*, with the hard words translated by pencil in the margin. Has there ever been a hero like Achilles or a tragedy queen like Clytæmnestra? Where are the schoolfellows, the teachers, the friends of the "'forties"? And yet how eternal, how ever-present, how familiar are the speeches of the *podas okus dios Achilles*, how intensely visible and real is the inexorable queen!

This book was given me by a dead friend, years ago, when we both looked forward to tell mankind what was in us. This book reached me at a time when I was too hard pressed to read it. It has stood there, year after year, with continual resolves to master it. Good heaven, it is still uncut, or but cut in parts, though full of what I want to know. I seize my paper-knife. I will read it now!

Let me implore any reader who has a fairly large library of his own, and is honestly anxious to know what his books contain, to devote some period of

leisure to go through these volumes, shelf by shelf, as they stand; to learn which of them he can remember well, which are half-read or unread. What pleasure and profit he would find in recalling the poetry he once so enjoyed, or in turning to such essays as he had hitherto overlooked. He would find, I am sure, that the very things he long wanted to know, the poetry that had almost faded from his memory, the bursts of eloquence and prophecy that had stirred his youth, now grown dim in his mind as "an ancient tale although the words were strong"—all this had stood silent and unnoticed on his walls for years and years, whilst he had been stuffing himself with the last short story, the lives of the royal laundry women; or it may be an article in a Magazine. Just like old Bunyan's man with a muck-rake, he had been searching in vain for jewels in the litter, whilst an angel above offered him a crown of gold, which he would not see as he grovelled in the dirt.

The seventy years which have rolled over me since I first spelt out my *menin aeide thea* have not dulled the rapture of listening to the ringing clarion of Homer. As he was the first to give me that thrill, communicable only in a foreign tongue, indeed only in Greek, so he remains to the last my supreme joy. And even to this day I love to take him up in my dirty school text, scandalously devoid of critical scholarship and of modern research. When I was a boy a dear old widow lady presented me with the books of her husband who had taken his degree at Christ Church about 1820 A.D. Now the classics current in the first twenty years of the nineteenth century would be thought to-day quite puerile and obsolete. But, as a schoolboy from 1840 to 1850, I used them, a Delphin *Horace*, Clarke's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, with Latin versions below the text, Porson's *Euripides* (and even Barnes'

of the eighteenth century), a *Tacitus* in four volumes of 1790, and Pliny's *Letters* of 1805.

Barbarous and corrupt as these texts would now be pronounced to be by scholars, I used them at school and college. I keep them still. I love to take them up in a spare hour, though I now have the thick, profound, critical editions printed in Leipsic or Berlin on that horrid blotting-paper; and of course I have the editions of our own scholars, my Jebb, and Jowett, Munro, Robinson Ellis, Conington, Verrall, and Murray. But for sentimental reasons I often prefer to take up an old school book. Scholarship and commentators go hang!—I say. I see the sense of the Greek well enough, and I can hear the shout of Achilles in the fighting line, and the wail of the women at the funeral of Hector, without any German professor's droning about the Digamma, or insisting on spurious lines which he marks to be obelised.

These editors are the death of Greek poetry. Who can really take to heart his *Iliad* whilst he is worried with disquisitions as to whether Δ belongs to the original poem, and if Z were not a later interpolation? Poetry is the very last thing these sages of the MSS., these sticklers for grammatical purism, ever think of or care for. I have never truly enjoyed my Homer until years after I had ceased to read him in those voluminous notes, and did not care one brass obol whether the *Zoster panaielos* of Menelaus meant a *supple* belt or a *shining* belt (of course a *brilliant* belt makes a better picture)—No! nor whether that aorist was rightly spelled in the Aeolic form. Does your "scholar" really feel the sublimity of the immortal epic, or does he merely dress up the words as the binder puts the pages into russia, calf, or vellum? Let me tell these pundits, if they want to understand the *Iliad*, to do what I have done: take a 12mo plain

Bekker text, as easy to hold as a child's hymn-book, and lie on the deck of a ship as it sails off the plain of Troas in sight of Ida and Olympus; or take an *Odyssey* bare of notes, and read the story of *leukolenos* Nausicaa in Corcyra, or the picture of the awakening of Ulysses from the grotto in Ithaca, on the very spot where the myth was first imagined. Homer, gentlemen, was a mighty poet. He was not a meticulous grammarian, nor a garrulous scholiast.

So, too, with my Æschylus. I enjoy him best in my old Dindorf text, exactly sixty years old, which at Wadham I heavily and stupidly margined. I used to insist that the *Agamemnon* was absolutely supreme and incomparable in the whole range of tragic poetry—not even "bar one." That chorus about the lion's whelp, those wails of Casandra, and the tremendous audacity with which the bloody queen bursts forth, always seemed to me the highest note of pure tragedy. But I now see that I must modify this judgment. It is the entire *Trilogy*, not the initial *Agamemnon* which is the true tragedy. Having seen the *Trilogy* played through by Benson, even in a sadly mutilated form, I now admit that the *Agamemnon* must not be detached, any more than the *Libation-bearers*, or the *Furies*. The *Trilogy* is one tragedy—a single, indivisible, incomparable, perfect drama—of which no single line can be added or abstracted, or forgotten.

Time was when I read my Æschylus with Blomfield, or Peile, or Paley, or Verrall and the rest; but it seems more natural, more "convincing," as critics say, to read him in the old school and college texts, dirty and dusty and scrawled over as they are. And I never so heartily entered into the illusion of the Attic stage as when I listened to it in the Bradfield open hemicycle, following the words in the ragged book which I had used as a boy of fifteen or so. Fifteen or twenty may

be the right age to unravel what the chorus in Aristophanes' *Frogs* calls "the charging of plume-waving words," the "high-prancing phrases," the "Titanic snortings" of Æschylus, son of Euphorion; but seventy or eighty is the proper age for enjoying his dramas, and for knowing how mighty a poet he was.

I am enchanted by the exquisite music of Sophocles, and the statuesque symmetry of his dramatic instinct. I am even steadily working through my seven volumes of Jebb, commentaries, notes, metrical analyses and all. As a very poor scholar myself I bless him for his invaluable prose version on the opposite page, as I bless B. B. Rogers for his marvellous verse rendering of Aristophanes. I bless G. G. Murray, too, for opening to us Euripides, and I have seen some of the plays on the stage. By the way, Murray's rhymed version of *King Œdipus*, though an astonishing *tour de force*, does not succeed in its impossible task. But I linger over Murray's *Euripides*, and having read him I go back to my Porson, and then I wonder how the Regius Professor at Oxford, who is not only one of the finest scholars whom England ever knew, and not only a scholar but a poet, and a historian, and indeed a philosopher, can find it in his heart to say so much for Euripides. I explain my meaning in a later essay.

To me Euripides is much what he was to Aristophanes, and to Æschylus himself in the *Frogs*. I know all they say, in this age of Ibsenomania and of Tolstoic *schwärmerei*, about the "subtle psychology," the "modernity," the "up-to-date humanitarianism," of the Attic apostle of Free Art! But all this makes me even less in love with Euripides. However great he may be in melodrama, in analytic psychology, as a romantist, as a revolutionist, I cannot allow that he is truly great in pure tragedy. Again, exquisite as is

the art of Sophocles, he is to me always the consummate artist, not the soul-stirring tragic poet. Sophocles may be the Raphael of Greek drama, with Raphael's ethereal grace and harmony and tone, his mastery of composition, his unerring self-restraint, his Attic genius for form and symmetry. But Raphael is not Michael Angelo, and Sophocles is not Æschylus. When Aristotle declared Euripides to be the most "tragical" of poets he must have meant in melodrama, "sensation," not in tragedy proper in our sense. When a young graduate wanted me to draw up a class list with "marks" of the Attic dramatists, I gave Æschylus 100, or "the highest possible," Sophocles 75, with a *proxime accessit*—and Euripides a fair 50, mainly for the remarkable pathos and the versatility of his work.

The heroic attempts of great scholars and of some real poets to reproduce in English verse the Greek dramatists interest me greatly, and if we admit that all fail for one reason or other, even when they succeed in part, they are all well worth reading. I take up all—from time to time—Dean Milman's, Fitzgerald's, Browning's—Morshead, Campbell, Warr, Swanwick, Blackie, Murray, and others who have tried their hand at Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides. Curiously enough, Æschylus, the most untranslatable of all, is the poet who chiefly fascinates the translators. To my mind Milman's *Agamemnon* is of all the most like a poem. Fitzgerald's attempt to recast or even parody the great drama is almost unforgivable, and I do not feel sure that he ever meant it to be made public. And Browning's *Agamemnon* is really absurd. On the whole, I think Morshead's *House of Atreus* gives the English layman the best idea of *Oresteia*. But for any one who has retained enough Greek to follow the text with a literal version beside him, I urge him

to read his Greek poets with such admirable prose translations as those of Jebb, Verrall, Paley, Butcher, Lang, and others. No poetry whatever can be turned into poetry in another language. But it can be enjoyed in its own language with the help of really adequate prose versions.

But of all modern translations of Greek drama the most wonderful is that of Aristophanes by B. B. Rogers. This illustrious scholar has been engaged on his favourite task now for upwards of sixty years—for in 1851, when we were both undergraduates at Wadham, he would recite to us portions of his version. His heavy practice at the Bar naturally interrupted a work so laborious as that of a verse translation of the eleven plays, with commentary and textual readings. He is now, in his eighty-fourth year, steadily working on revision of the whole, which will be one of the masterpieces of English scholarship. One who will study this astonishing *tour de force*, with enough Greek left in him to follow the text, will have some insight into the inexhaustible fountain of wit, poetry, satire, portraiture, and torrential eloquence left us by the inimitable comedian of Athens, who is at once the most Attic of Athenians and the most modern of the ancients.

When it comes to Greek lyrics I draw the line, and drink, if at all, in occasional sips. I used to enjoy Bergk's *Lyrics* sixty years ago at Wadham ; though, as we did not "take up" lyrics, it was sheer waste of time for purposes of "exam." Hesiod was always too dull for me, and Pindar too stodgy. At school and college I used a fine old massive octavo *Pindar* of 1814 (from the library of my Christ Church friend) with the Benedictine Latin version below the page, Heyne's *annotationes*, and Damm's *Lexicon Pindaricum*. Oh ! how we sweated over those Olympic odes ! But

now I give it up, even with the excellent translations of my old college friends, Ernest Myers and Thomas Charles Baring. It is hopeless for a busy man to take up Pindar. Pindarum quisquis studet æmulari, says Horace, will have a fall. And we may say the same of any one who would read him—not being a fresh and professed Greek scholar.

The lighter Greek lyrics are quite another thing. Even at Wadham I vowed that "the world has never produced the equal of Sappho." And now I use a very pretty little duodecimo Sappho by H. Thornton Wharton, with memoir and *Life*, all the fragments, and all known translations collected, with a new quaint fount of Greek typography—and the head of Sappho by L. Alma Tadema—altogether a dainty book to be taken up any spare ten minutes. Then I am so old-fashioned as to enjoy the spurious *Anacreontica*, which used to tickle my palate as a schoolboy. I dare say it would shock a serious scholar, but there is a Tommy Moore rattle about the sad dog who used Anacreon's name which runs in one's head. And now some kind friends have given me an *édition de luxe* by A. H. Bullen, with fascinating pictures by J. R. Weguelin (quarto, 1893), with a grand Greek type, verse translation opposite, and the genuine fragments of Anacreon from Bergk (1882). The book has ten somewhat luscious studies by Weguelin as befits the old amourist. Altogether a pretty book. My copy is numbered 25.

As to Theocritus we are particularly fortunate. In the first place Christopher Wordsworth's text and notes form one of the boasts of British scholarship. The Greek typography splendid; and, in spite of the Doric dialect and queer words, no one need be stopped who uses the really consummate prose translation of Andrew Lang and the masterly verse translation of

C. S. Calverley. It is not too much to say that Mr. Lang's prose Theocritus, like his Homer, may really enable one who does not read Greek to have some idea of what Greek poems are.

The translations also of another Oxford scholar carry this even further. There is no book in my library which I take down and taste and taste again with the gusto of an epicure more often than Mackail's *Greek Anthology* (new edition of 1906). The marvellous versatility and continuity of Greek epigrams, ranging over some twelve or even fifteen centuries—from Solon to Constantine Porphyrogenitus in the middle of the tenth century—is one of the marvels in the history of literature. No other language has ever retained its vocabulary and its form over so vast a period, and to this day it is but slightly modified. Latin changed its forms more often and more radically than Greek. What a range of topic, mood, and thought in these Epigrams, or Epitaphs, or monumental Thoughts, for they are all of these. Take Mr. Mackail's classification of the short poems under twelve heads. These are :—

Love—Prayers and Dedications—Epitaphs—Literature and Art—Religion—Nature—The Family—Beauty—Fate and Change—The Human Comedy—Death—Life.

Every one knows that noble epitaph on the dead Spartans of Thermopylæ—

> Friend, report to the men of Lacedæmon
> That here we lie, obeying their ordinances.

This is perhaps the earliest and the best authenticated epitaph of Greece. How tender is Meleager's "Parting at Dawn"—

> Farewell, Morning Star, Herald of Dawn,
> And quickly come as Evening Star,

Bringing again unseen
Her whom thou takest away.

This play of words upon the Planet Venus was a favourite idea with the Greeks, and gave rise to the celebrated epigram attributed to the philosopher Plato, which Mackail calls "the most perfect epigram ever written in any language." It was on the death of Aster, a beautiful boy (Aster being Greek for Star):—

Aster, thou who didst once shine
Amongst the living as our Morning Star,
Now in death thou shinest
As the Evening Star to those below.

I don't call it more than a pretty conceit. But in Greek it is full of pathetic music.

It is in their monumental epitaphs that the Greeks show all the pathos of reserve. I love that "sweet myrtle-berry of Callimachus, ever full of acid honey," as Meleager calls it. How exquisite in its marble simplicity is this:—

The child of twelve years
Philip his father laid here,
His great hope—Nicoteles.

Or take this, on another dead boy:—

As you look on this monument,
Pity him who was so beautiful—and died.

But Meleager was a lover too:—

The cup is sweet and joyous, and it says
It sips the bubbling lips of Love's darling, Zenophile.
Blessed would it be if she would
Put up her lips to my lips and, without drawing breath,
Drink up the soul in me.

Not but what some of these verses are "epigrams" in our sense:—

One, who having married once, seeks a second wife
Is a sailor, who, after shipwreck, sets forth towards a perilous channel.

This, as Mackail reminds us, was Dr. Johnson's "triumph of Hope over Experience."

But for sheer bitterness, neither Voltaire nor Heine ever beat this :—

A cobra, a toad, a viper—keep clear of—
And of the Laodiceans ; avoid also a mad dog,
And again, I say—the Laodiceans too !

Yet Holy Writ gives us a very different picture of the people of Laodicea. St. Paul speaks of his yearning towards them (Coloss. ii. 1), and he salutes "the brethren which are in Laodicea," and desires his epistle to be "read also in the Church of the Laodiceans." And in Revelation iii. 14 we find there was an "angel of the Church of the Laodiceans." And yet, perhaps about the same time, the Greek poet calls the Laodiceans worse than a toad or a mad dog.

I suspect that the "angel of the Church of the Laodiceans" was a venerable Jew with whom the Greek satirist had a quarrel. And this reminds me of a point by which I have often been struck, but have never seen noticed. Meleager, who collected these epigrams in his famous *Garland*, and himself wrote 134 of them, was a man of Gadara, the very place so infested with devils, whom Christ cast out into the 2000 swine (Mark v. ; Luke viii.). Meleager might easily have known Joseph, the husband of Mary. Not only was Meleager a Gadarene, but Menippus, his contemporary, was also. Again, Philodemus, a distinguished Epicurean philosopher, was also a Gadarene ; and he is mentioned by Cicero as profligate, but of consummate wit and elegance. He

is also mentioned by Horace in that appalling satire "*ambubaiarum collegia, pharmacopolæ*," where he quotes apparently a very nasty epigram of Philodemus. All three poets wrote what they called "witty maxims," and amatory pieces of the freest sort. All three men were Gadarenes, and about the age of Joseph and Simeon.

In his own epitaph, Meleager boasts of his origin at Gadara, which he calls a "sacred land," and he says, "Stranger at this grave, if thou art a Syrian, say 'Salam'"; and in another poem he calls the "Syrian Gadara his Attic Fatherland." Yet in the very district where the Gospel was first preached, and nearly about the age of the older apostles, lived three famous Greek poets who devoted their lives to satire, amatory, and lyric effusions. Could any of the devils who went into the swine have come out of them?

This, however, is the least of the paradox. We owe the immense collection of the Greek *Anthology* with all its profusion of erotic, satiric, and polytheist poetry to Planudes, a Byzantine monk, a contemporary of Dante, a theologian and eminent ambassador in Europe. We know also that Heliodorus (in the fourth century), author of the earliest amatory romance, was a Christian bishop, and a native of Syria. Indeed the entire antique literature, including Aristophanes, Lucian, Athenæus, Anacreon, and all the rest, has been preserved for us by Christian ecclesiastics of one kind or other. No doubt at Byzantium, for eleven centuries, from Constantine I. to Constantine XII., in the midst of a Christian and indeed grossly superstitious society, there always existed a keen zest for pagan poetry, and even for Greek *facetiæ*, just as in Italy in the *Cinque Cento*, or in France in the age of Voltaire. Of this the *Anthology* is the most signal proof, for it was largely produced, and entirely

preserved in Christian ages, and even by professed Churchmen and ecclesiastics.

Not only was some of the lightest and most human of Greek literature produced in the very country and the very age in which the Gospel was to appear, but those two great concurrent forces which have made the modern world—I mean Roman Law and the New Testament—were produced within the space of a few generations by Hellenised and Romanised Syrians, and within a moderate distance of that coast we now call the Levant—say between Gaza and Tarsus, a distance of about 400 miles from north to south, and a district not more than fifty miles from the sea-coast.

If we were to follow out this thought we should have to recount the schools of philosophy, law, poetry, and religion in the cities, or those taught by natives of Tyre, Sidon, Berytus, Jerusalem, Cæsarea, Ptolemais, Gadara, Emesa, Damascus, Samosata, Tripoli, Laodicea, Antioch, Tarsus—to which we might add Palmyra and Alexandria. What a splendid world of thought, imagination, enthusiasm, and devotion flourished within that small corner of our planet for some five centuries, from a century or two before the birth of Christ and for two or three centuries after it.

And what is that region now? What has it been for ten or twelve centuries since the Hegira? It is an awful sight—which almost makes a man of peace forgive the French Conquest of Algeria, and the Italian Conquest of Tripoli and Cyrene—to witness the vast and continuous remains of Greek and Roman civilisation, industry, arts, and letters in those North African regions which are now lifeless deserts roamed over by wild barbarians. What prodigies of intellect, of genius, of poetry, of beauty were produced in the compass of Asia Minor, of Syria, and of the North African littoral in the ten centuries between Thales

and Augustine! And now for twelve centuries how blank is the record of these very regions! Does civilisation sway, like a pendulum, backwards and forwards from one quarter of our planet to another? Will the New Zealand student of 2912, as he sits on the ruins of St. Paul's, really bring with him a pocket Shakespeare—or will he care only for telesemes from Mars?

I have not forgotten my Latin Classics, but somehow the Greek seem to meet my humour more readily and often. With all his pathos, music, and thought, Virgil is not a cheerful companion. One needs to be in a serious mood to enjoy his *lacrymæ rerum*, and it is natural to think of him as a sensitive invalid rather than a happy man. But take him at the right hour at his best—and his best no doubt are his episodes—what fascination in the familiar lines which we all know, and yet none can exactly reproduce in English. I cannot see that any poet has succeeded in turning Latin poetry into English verse. I try them all, from Dryden and Gifford to Conington, Robinson Ellis, Theodore Martin, Henry King, and Bowen. Perhaps one reason is that Latin is the highest type of a monumental language—one which reduces its words to the fewest and avoids the subsidiary vocables which are the peculiarity of English. Take the famous line—

Parcere subjectis et debellare superbos.

Here are but five words, two being verbs and two practically substantives. Now put it in English. It runs (Remember, O Roman)—

To be merciful with those who submit,
And to war down those who defy you.

But that makes fifteen words—not five. And though it might be put barely thus in nine words—

To spare the subject and to crush the haughty,

the full meaning is not there. Indeed there is a subtlety in Virgil which is incommunicable by words. It is the melody of phrase which enchants us and haunts the memory like the *Adelaida* of Beethoven.

I suppose most persons remember Horace better than almost any other poet, Latin or Greek. The reason is, no doubt, that he clothes a sententious commonplace with such perfect clarity and light-hearted wisdom that, once heard, the phrases stick in the memory like a proverb of our childhood.

What can be more clear-cut, more tenderly humorous, and yet more slily pathetic than the famous :—

Linquenda tellus et domus et placens
uxor, neque harum quas colis arborum
te praeter invisas cupressos
ulla brevem dominum sequetur.

Here is poetry wrung out of the commonest of truisms—grace obtained by the perfect simplicity and directness of the wording—and a sort of melancholy charm irresistibly playing about the most natural statement of obvious facts—all achieved by nothing but felicity of language.

The nearest analogue of Horace that we have is Pope. Nothing, in our rather loosely-jointed tongue, has ever surpassed his neat, sententious apophthegms, such as :—

Know then thyself, presume not God to scan ;
The proper study of mankind is Man—

or—

A mighty maze, but not without a plan.

And Pope can condense into four short lines the entire history of the evolution of religion :—

Father of All ! in every age,
In every Clime ador'd
By Saint, by Savage, and by Sage,
Jehovah, Jove, or Lord !

But how far below Horace is Pope even at his best. He can imitate Horace, but he cannot translate him. And when we get to the *Ars Poetica*, with its tags that every educated man knows by heart, and the maxims which come into a thousand essays and speeches—

Difficile est proprie communia dicere—
parturiunt montes, nascetur ridiculus mus,

we have that concentrated essence of good sense and simplicity, in a memorable phrase, which has never been equalled unless in a Greek epigram. I can take up my Horace at any time, even if I have but a spare ten minutes before an appointment, or the dinner-bell.

I don't much trouble my Orellius (two fat vols. of 1700 pp., Zurich, 1850), unless I get puzzled. But the edition I love is that of H. A. J. Munro with C. W. King's illustrations from antique gems (8vo, Bell & Co., 1869)—a work admirably printed, exquisitely engraved, and edited as to text and illustrations by two consummately accomplished scholars. This book is to me the very perfection of a student's manual. When I was a boy, before Mr. King's gems were engraved, I used Dean Milman's beautiful edition with illustrations (Murray, 1849), but I now prefer Munro's text. How delicious are those antique gems. If I had been ever able to collect anything, my hobby would have been antique gems which seem to me to possess the very aroma of the old world.

I do a passage from Lucretius now and then with my Munro, using the translation very freely; and also Catullus with my Robinson Ellis, and Persius with my John Conington and Nettleship. But, oh !

in the name of all the thousand and one kisses of *mea Lesbia*—why bury the *lepidum novum libellum* of the airiest of poets under two ponderous octavos of nearly one thousand closely printed pages? Perhaps in the year 2912 Anno Domini, or Anno Diaboli, the University of the Planet Mars will issue the Songs of Robert Burns in four folio volumes of learned commentary and a big glossary.

When in the mood for study I do sometimes take up a Lucretius, a Catullus, or a Persius; but they are all rather stiff for a busy man. And for my part I prefer a handy Anthology with selections—such as that dainty little duodecimo *Latin Anthology* (Macmillan, 1909) in the "Golden Treasury" series, curiously anonymous as yet. This invaluable book has passages selected from Latin poetry extending over six centuries from Ennius to Boëthius, beautifully printed and with adequate notes and an exquisite portrait of Augustus from the Blacas Cameo in our Museum. In 180 pages, which will go in a jacket pocket, this handy book contains gems of Latin verse. I keep it beside me on my writing-table, and in my travelling bag when I leave home.

I am all for the old tag for boys—*aut disce, aut discede, manet sors altera caedi.* It is right that the young should be pounded through three huge commentaries of many volumes on a single poem; but busy men and old men want handy books—what the Greeks call *encheiridia.* When I went on a cruise the other day I took a dozen of the "Everyman" standard reprints. I will not say, with Kaliph Rosebery and Grand Vizier Gosse, burn old books and only keep the last new thing. No! I say to the busy men, and to aged men—Read your old books again, those you have forgotten, those you never cut—but read them in some pleasant and portable form.

CHAPTER II

ANCIENT PROSE

Let me reassure the gentle reader that I have no intention of discussing Greek and Latin texts, or of troubling him with any niceties of classical scholarship. In these desultory notes about the books I take down from my own shelves from time to time, I have much more to say about English versions than of original texts, and I shall talk more often about books which purists neglect, and are seldom heard of in Academic "Schools."

I can enjoy a dialogue of Plato in my Jowett, my Llewellyn Davies, or my F. J. Church, without reference to Bekker or Stallbaum. And I read Aristotle on the *Constitution of Athens* without troubling the British Museum for Papyrus CXXXI. Why are we to be tied down through life to the "books" and "periods" which are prescribed for Degree examinations? Professor Freeman was never tired of denouncing the pedantry of scholars who turned away from the "bad Greek" of Polybius — "the one Greek historian before whose eyes the history of the world was laid open as it never was to any other man before or after." And Professor J. W. Mackail, in his masterly manual of *Latin Literature*, has much to tell us about Petronius and his *Supper of Trimalchio*,

about Fronto and his fable of the *Origin of Sleep*, about Apuleius and his *Cupid and Psyche* and his pantomime entitled *The Golden Ass*.

Now, in my day, at Oxford, where we were pounded through the *Posterior Analytics*, and that cryptic Persius, and were drilled to imitate Sophocles' iambics and Cicero's *Familiar Letters*, nobody ever read—even heard of—Apuleius, Fronto, or Petronius—much less had we seen the Greek of Polybius or Lucian, of Epictetus, or Theophrastus, or knew a line of the *Pervigilium Veneris*, or *Daphnis and Chloe*. I dare say all this is now remedied, and "scholarship" is not limited to half a dozen Greek writers of one age and as many Latin writers of another age. I do not encourage any general reader to try the original texts of any of these. But there are now very good English versions of all of them—and there is excellent reading in all.

One who knows Professor Dill's two works on *Roman Society in the Empire*, or Warde Fowler's *Roman Religion*, or Professor Vernon Arnold's *Roman Stoicism*, or Alfred Zimmern's *Greek Commonwealth*, will understand how stunted a view of Latin thought it is to narrow down our reading to the Augustan Age, or our knowledge of Greece to the Periclean Age. These later writers, whom "scholars" despise for their decadent style, are full of novel ideas and new forms of art, which ultimately blossomed into mediæval literature. To exclude all this is to ruin the sense of continuity in civilisation, as Freeman so often and so justly insisted. And I do not hesitate to say that one who read with intelligence mere translations of the Greek writers between Theophrastus and Longus in the fifth century A.D., and who read the Roman writers between Tacitus and Claudian, would really understand the spirit of Greece

and the spirit of Rome better than some learned first-class man who can study Thucydides in a railway train, and construe at sight Catullus, Tacitus, and Persius.

There used to be a tradition at Oxford that, in the early days of "school exams.," men like Professor Brewer, Orlando Hyman, and, I think, Robert Lowe, offered as their "Books" the Greek and Latin Classics. But when I knew the "Schools," we were tied down to the regulation authors, and we had to know them pretty close. I believe Macaulay said that a real scholar was one who would read his Greek Plato by the fire, with his feet on the fender. I am not up to this myself, but there is no reason why we should not enjoy an hour or two with Plato in one of the admirable versions ready to hand. Plato's Greek is to my mind, as I wrote long ago, the most perfect form of prose style in all literature—"easy, lucid, graceful, witty, pathetic, imaginative by turns." Now very much of this exquisite language is retained in Jowett's translation. And I know no more delightful book for a quiet hour.

Well! if Jowett's *Plato*, in five stout octavos, be too heavy to hold in an armchair, there are two lovely little 12mos in the "Golden Treasury" series, the *Republic*, by Ll. Davies and Vaughan, and *The Trial and Death of Socrates*, being four Dialogues in one volume, by F. J. Church. This delicious little book, which I have often had in hand since its first issue in 1880, has in it the very aroma of Plato, all his Attic grace and mind. If a man desires to enter into the spirit of the most exquisite prose style ever devised by the genius of man, let him read the story of the death of Socrates in the *Phaedo*. Read it in Greek if you can—I read the original at school; but in the sixty-four years since then, I dare say I should want

my Liddell and Scott at hand. Now I read it in Church with ever new delight, though I care for Plato's metaphysics as little as I care for the rhapsodical gammon of Professor Bergson or Miss Marie Corelli —who used to be so sorry for poor Satan.

Men who really care to read ancient history in the ancient authors have excellent English versions of Herodotus by Professor Rawlinson, of Thucydides by Jowett, and of Polybius and Tacitus by Oxford and Cambridge scholars. I have them on my shelves, but I cannot pretend that I use them for more than an occasional reference. No one can be said to be well read unless he knows, at any rate, something of Herodotus' own account of the Persian War and of the great speeches of Pericles. A man must indeed have forgotten his Greek if he cannot still turn to these with the help of Jowett, Thomas Arnold, Grote, Curtius, and Holm. No one reads Polybius for his style, and he may really be as well read in English. Those cool, weighty judgments of his go quite naturally into our tongue. Shuckburgh came long after my time, and my only translation was that of "Mr. Hampton," of the eighteenth century. It was quite good enough for my purpose. The two men who have most highly praised Polybius are the historian, Edward Freeman, and the philosopher, Auguste Comte. I have already quoted the really extravagant encomium of Freeman. But it was Comte who spoke of "the great Polybius," "the last organ of Greek Sociology," and he placed him in the Calendar next to Alexander.

I must make a special plea for Tacitus, to be read at least partly in the original Latin. Comte, again, calls Tacitus "incomparable," and he places him in the Calendar next to Socrates, no doubt on account of "his profound insight into human nature." The

magical phrases of Tacitus crop up to this day in speeches and political articles. Every one knows his "*solitudinem faciunt pacem appellant;*" his "*sera juvenum Venus, ideoque inexhausta pubertas;*" "*corrumpere et corrumpi saeculum vocatur;*" "*omnium consensu capax imperii, nisi imperasset;*" and his famous "*felix opportunitate mortis;*" "*odisse quem laeseris.*"

How tremendous is that Preface to Tacitus' *Histories*. Its close, sardonic sentences sound in our ears like the judgments of Rhadamanthus in Hell. "A time of catastrophies, of bloody wars, rent with seditions, cruel even in peace. Four emperors slain, three civil wars, volcanoes and earthquakes ruined our lovely coast; Rome and its monuments destroyed by fire at the hands of its citizens, public ceremonies polluted, sensational adulteries, exile, slaughter on sea and land everywhere rife. Birth, wealth, public service whether filled or declined, were counted crimes, to have a reputation for virtue was a sentence of death" —*Nobilitas, opus, omissi gestique honores pro crimine; et ob virtutes, certissimum exitium.* These inimitable apophthegms cannot be translated, and must be kept in their gem-like chiselling.

Tacitus is no easy author, but with a good translation, such as Church and Brodribb's, no one need be stopped from reading the *Germania* and the *Agricola* in the original. My Harrow and Christ Church godfather, Robert Lawrence, left me a delightful book with these two essays (Cambridge, 8vo, 1809). I take up this fine and dear volume in its original calf binding, scored, I regret to say, with my boyish pencil notes, and I can read again and again the magnificent eulogium of Agricola by his son-in-law. And when we reach the death of the hero, without his daughter or her husband by his bedside, we feel that the Roman stoicism of the historian gives way in a truly modern

outburst of pathos. When Tacitus in his stately confidence declares that the glory of Agricola will survive for after ages, in reality he is prophesying his own immortality.

Tacitus, of course, brings up Pliny, the Younger, who was "proof-reader" to Tacitus, and the pair used to be called "the duumvirs of letters." How delightfully fresh, how modern, how redolent of our own culture, are those Letters of Pliny to his friends. Without any thought of "exams.," I used to read them with that eccentric scholar, Orlando Haydon Hyman, of Wadham, who would buy books, and tear out the pages as he turned them over, and when the whole was read *and remembered*, he would litter the floor with the covers. To Hyman, a classic was what the letters of a friend are to us. But he made me love Pliny's *Epistles*. How modern, how human, how English is this:—

Quid agit Comum, tuae meaeque deliciae? quid suburbanum amœnissimum? quid illa porticus, verna semper? quid πλατάνων opacissimus? quid Euripus viridis et gemmeus, quid subjectus et serviens lacus?

And people who soak themselves in despatches of Pitt, Peel, and Palmerston, never read Pliny's Letters!

I cherish a delightful octavo with Latin notes, dated 1805, and still in its perfect calf binding, with its gold lettering and tooling fresh and bright. Why cannot modern binders make calf backs to last 100 years? Most of the bindings that I had at Wadham are all out of shape. They tell me now: "Oh! calf will not last more than twenty years!" How delightful is that *descriptio villae Laurentinae* (Ep. XVII.). "Do you wonder why I love my Laurens?" he writes to Gallus. "You would cease to wonder if you knew all the charm of the house, the convenience of its site, the spacious coast it commands." The Greek terms

of architecture and convenience remind us how completely imperial civilisation was a combination of Roman power with Greek intelligence. The *Epistles* contain more than one hundred Greek words beside whole pages of extracts from Greek authors. It was my old enjoyment of Pliny's *Laurentinum* which led me to write my book on the *gratiam villae* of Sutton Place.

I had as a gift from the library of our dear old Mark Pattison, a copy of an early *Frontonis Reliquiae*; and though I certainly never studied Fronto, who was a Roman Euphuist of the decadence, I did turn up the famous *Letters* that passed between Marcus Aurelius, Emperor, "my Lord," and "my Master Fronto," about the fêtes at Alsium, to see the fable on the Origin of Sleep, so charmingly introduced by Pater in *Marius the Epicurean*. The *Creation of Sleep* is a very pretty fable. It reminds me of the delicious outburst of Sancho Panza: "Oh! blessed is the man who invented sleep!" There is a great deal about sleep in the famous correspondence between the Emperor and the old rhetorician whom Marcus at last found out to be a windbag. But the letters between the saintly Master of the World — fancy Agrippa addressing Augustus as "My Lord!"—and his prig of "a Master," Fronto, are among the most fascinating pages of antiquity.

I do not recommend any one to read Fronto, the Doctor Johnson of the second century (A.D.), who attacked the Christians and tried to return to the language of Ennius. But I do advise every one to get that fine *Life of Marcus Aurelius*, by Paul Barron Watson, of Cambridge, U.S.A., and to read what he tells us in his second chapter about the intercourse of Fronto and Marcus Aurelius. Their letters were fished up, or scraped up, a century ago by Angelo

Mai out of a pile of Church chronicles which had been written over them on the parchment. They are still in a broken state, many in Greek. Nobody reads them now. But P. B. Watson has translated enough of them to show us how lovable, how affectionate, how noble was the nature of M. Aurelius, how playful and intimate was the relation between this imperial hero and his devoted but rather finikin tutor. Here, again, in a book which the "Schools' Examiners" would not touch with the tip of their blue pencils, we have a picture of a world far different from that of Cæsar or Tacitus: curiously modern, and already bearing the germs of the mediæval world.

My Christ Church friend left me, among other books, a handsomely bound octavo of 1804 of the Clarendon Press, Simpson's edition of Epictetus, Cebes, Prodicus and Theophrastus in one volume; text, Latin translations, and notes. I suppose that at Oxford they read these books one hundred years ago, before the rage for Examinations set in; but in my day, fifty years later, we never heard of these authors. I do not recommend any one to read the Discourses of Epictetus in the somewhat stiff Greek of the original. But there is no need to do so, for there are excellent editions of the translation by George Long in "Bohn's Classical Library," and another in "Everyman's Library" (No. 402). There are also many translations of the *Pinax*, or Picture, or Cartoon of Cebes.

Cebes was a follower of Socrates and one of the enquirers at his last day in the *Phaedo*. His Platonic Dialogue on Virtue and Vice, in an almost mediæval kind of allegory, is perhaps seldom read now, and I cannot say I have done more than dip into it, to see what Oxford men took up in old days. The *Choice of Hercules* is the famous allegory by Prodicus, of

whom we hear in Xenophon's *Memoirs*, which had such a singular success all through Greek and Roman times, and in the Middle Ages, and down to the age of Reynolds, furnished such endless "motives" to Moral Discourses, Painting, Tapestry, Poetry and all forms of Art. The *Characters* of Theophrastus are now well known, and have been admirably translated, edited and annotated by the indefatigable industry of the late Sir Richard Jebb.

Though I do not suggest the reading of Epictetus in the Greek, he can be read very well now in good English—perhaps for choice in A. L. Humphreys' quarto "luxurious" reprint of George Long's translation. There has been a great revival of interest in Epictetus of late, owing largely to such books as Sir Samuel Dill's *Roman Society*, Dr. Bigg's *Church under the Roman Empire*, Warde Fowler's *Roman Religions*, Professor Vernon Arnold's *Roman Stoicism*. How fine, how wise, how truly religious are many of the sayings of the Stoical slave :—

"Death is a change, not from the state which now is to that which is not, but to that which is not now. Shall I, then, no longer exist? *You* will not exist, but you will be something else, of which the world now has need."

Surely this is Comte's *subjective immortality*. Here is the *Te Deum* of this apostolic Stoic :—

"Great is God, who has given us implements with which to cultivate the earth. I give thee all thanks that thou hast allowed me to join in this thy assemblage of men, and to see thy works, and to comprehend thy administration. Let us sing hymns to the deity, and bless him, and tell of his benefits."

He adopts the Hymn of Pythagoras; one quite as good as Bishop Ken's :—

"Let sleep not come upon thy languid eyes
Before each daily action thou hast scanned;
What's done amiss, what done, what left undone;
From first to last examine all, and then
Blame what is wrong, in what is right rejoice."
—*G. Long.*

Epictetus was a stern moralist, and in some ways would satisfy a Cromwellian Ironside or a primitive Quaker—but his maxims upon marriage, chastity, and the dangers of youthful philosophers were full of moderation and good sense, such as would scandalise the Christian fanaticism of Origen and Tertullian. Let not the young acolyte of Stoicism entangle himself with women. Whatever you do in this matter keep within what's lawful and proper. But don't go about scolding those who do not share your moral views, making yourself a nuisance, and perpetually bragging about your own superior virtue.

When one reads Epictetus, Seneca, Marcus Aurelius, and looks into the lives and teachings of Zeno, Cleanthes, and the later Stoics, one is constantly reminded how close are the analogies of the nobler Stoics with the best and earliest followers of Christ—how in not a few things—in good sense, in humanity, in practical morality, they were superior to the contemporary teachers of the Gospel. There was always in them a something wanting; nor was Epictetus such a power as Paul, nor was Aurelius as great as Augustine. Superior to the Christians as the greater Stoics were in their more rational and balanced view of human nature, they failed to recognise what a tremendous social revolution, what a purging as by fire, was needed to cast out the devils of self-indulgence, cruelty, and lust, in which the ancient world was sunk.

For my own part, too, I always feel how close to a

truly human religion the wiser and purer spirits of the ancient world were gradually becoming conscious. Plutarch, Seneca, Trajan, Tacitus, Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius, with their solid, cultivated, human morality and humane ideals, were more akin to Hume, Adam Smith, Kant, Condorcet and Comte than were the Christian Fathers of Rome or Byzantium. Had such men been powerful enough to recast the antique world, with slavery, debauchery, and savagery rampant around them, civilisation might have been spared some centuries of Monkish tyranny. It was not to be. A cataclysmal upheaval of society from its bed-rock had to work itself out under cruel and terrific phantasms, from the insanities and inhumanities of which we are slowly and painfully shaking ourselves free.

Is there not an uncanny warning to us all to-day as we read Tacitus, Marcus Aurelius, Epictetus, and see what pure and sublime thoughts the better spirits could nourish, as we study the record of the high civilisation of those ages of the Antonines, the art, the learning, all the resources of the Empire stretching from the Grampians to the Euphrates, and as yet troubled only by Picts, and Goths, and Parthians, and Numidian barbarians on its distant frontiers—and then in a century or two over the greater part of that vast dominion everything was swept away—its laws, its arts, its learning, its culture, its religion! Will Europe ever know again its Dark Ages?

I never read Theophrastus at school or college, or until I got hold of Jebb's translation. And now, in the new edition by Dr. Sandys (1909), it is a most entertaining book. I do not care much for Theophrastus himself. There is a crudeness, and even a coarseness, about most of his Characters which is far from the subtlety of Molière, La Bruyère, La Rochefoucauld, Addison, or Swift. The slight sketch of

the *areskos*, the *faux bonhomme*, is piquant, and so is the *microphilotimos*, the swagger "smart" man, the dandy "æsthete" (the compound word for the man who goes in for social distinction is not translateable). That is a delightful touch when the smart man puts up a tombstone to his little Maltese puppy—and inscribes an epitaph on him—"pure-bred Maltese." Only nowadays it would be "a pedigree Pekinese."

But the real interest is in Professor Jebb's notes and illustrations. They give a wonderful picture of Athenian manners in the time of Alexander. How like, and yet how different, was life then and life to-day—how like, and yet how unlike, was Athens to Paris in the seventeenth century or London in the eighteenth. The swagger smart ways are those of a Park Lane or Fifth Avenue millionaire—and yet the general tone of the *characters* is that of homely farmers or small tradesmen in the provinces in the time of the *Vicar of Wakefield* or *Tom Jones*. Read Jebb's *Theophrastus* carefully through with all his explanations and illustrations, and you will get a vivid idea of—

> Athens, the eye of Greece, Mother of arts
> And eloquence, native to famous wits—

a city which for centuries led the way to man in all things of beauty, truth, and grace, and yet had a democratic simplicity, an ideal equality, and a material penury, which has never been seen since then on earth, unless in some Franciscan or Trappist monastery.

There is another moralist of the quiet age of Athens, which Sir Richard Jebb has opened to us, in his fine translation and scholarly edition of Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, also revised by Dr. Sandys (1909). It is a real encyclopædia of antique ethical analytics in 200 pages, as Bishop Copleston told us, "a text-

book of human feeling; a storehouse of taste; an exemplar of condensed and accurate, but uniformly clear and candid, reasoning." Of course, Aristotle is not Plato. He is not a master of fascinating language; nor has he the stern Puritanism of Epictetus, nor the spiritual melancholy of Aurelius. How shrewd, how sensible, how universal-minded in his survey of human speech, is "the master of those who know." Utterly different in form as it is, systematic, reserved, and self-restrained, the *Rhetoric* reminds me in its profound knowledge of man and of the world of Bacon's *Essays*. Do our psychologic romancers, our soul-poets, and esoteric critics study Aristotle's *Rhetoric*?

Now, no one who knows me will suppose that I care for nothing but philosophers and essayists, and do not enjoy the wit of Lucian and the romances of Apuleius and Longus. Every thoughtful person now recognises the startling analogies between the world of the later Roman Empire and our own times. The similarities have been admirably described by Leslie Stephen in the famous essay in his *Apology*, which I keep next to Mr. Balfour's *Belief*. As Leslie says, we have just what they had in the time of the Antonines—"theosophical moonshine," "rationalistic interpretation of orthodoxy," "the galvanising dead creeds," sundry "philosophic moralities," and many "strange superstitions." Hence the number of new books about ancient thought in the three or four centuries when the Gospel was fighting its way against apolaustic Culture and rotting Paganism. Of these historical studies the recent works of Prof. Dill and of Warde Fowler are good types.

And now we have the whole of Lucian, admirably translated by H. W. and F. G. Fowler (4 vols., 12mo, Oxford, 1905). This delightful book is as curiously

modern in essential thought as it is historically redolent of the Roman world. The translators have caught the very spirit of Lucian's banter, and the English is as racy as Thackeray's *Book of Snobs*. Any one who enjoys real fun should try one of the *Dialogues of the Dead*, or one of the *Dialogues of the Hetairae*, or *Charon*, or the *Death of Peregrinus*. A friend of mine, liable to insomnia, keeps by the bedside a copy of Fowler's *Lucian*, and takes it up to while away a wakeful hour. Any one can turn to any part of the four volumes to amuse a spare half-hour. He would find it quite as lively as one of the wonderful sixpenny novels which form the staple literature of our motor age.

Then there is that singular and enigmatic person Petronius, whom Tacitus celebrates for his *erudite luxuriousness*, "the arbiter of elegance," the Oscar Wilde of Neronian æstheticism, the professor of the "too-too," whose wild satires remind us, says Dill, of Smollet and Le Sage. Petronius' most famous bit, the *Supper of Trimalchio*, has been well translated and edited by Michael J. Ryan, 1905. Trimalchio is the "bounder," or "rastaquouère," the self-made vulgarian, who by his money thrusts himself into society, curiously like a gold-bug of Park Lane or Chicago. All this makes the *Supper* worth reading for all its debased Latin and slum talk. Petronius, a sort of Beau Brummel to Nero's Prince Regent, paints a vivid but disgusting picture of the "smart" world of Rome — of Paris — of New York — of London. Vulgarians are immortal.

Every one has heard of the beautiful myth of *Cupid and Psyche*; but I doubt if they have all read it in the book in which it first appears in literary form, and I doubt still more if many of them have read through the works of Apuleius, *Golden Ass*, *Florida*, *Apology*, and all. No one need read the Latin original, except those

parts of the book which the translator declines to print in English; but it is all to be read in "Bohn's Classical Library," and, in spite of its characteristic brutalities, the *Metamorphoses* is highly entertaining. Apuleius, an African, half-Numidian he says himself, comes from Madaura, near the country where Italians and Arabs are slaughtering one another now. He is a rather mysterious person himself, and his various writings are a startling testimony to the clash that filled the Roman world in the second century A.D., between bestial and frivolous licence, spiritual mysticism, ideal aspirations for a new Heaven and a new earth, fierce asceticism, and preaching of the Sermon on the Mount. Apuleius touches on all. In the words of Dill—"the painter of the foulest scenes in ancient literature, seems to have cherished the faith in a heavenly King, First Cause of all nature, Father of all living things, Saviour of Spirits, beyond the range of time and change, remote, ineffable."

One may read *Cupid and Psyche* in Pater's version, and it looks as strange in the licentious fun of the *Golden Ass* as if we had a long episode of Spenser's *Faëry Queen* stuck into the middle of Gulliver's account of the Yahoos and the Houyhnhnms. But the whole of the *Golden Ass* is curious and amusing. It reminds one of some Italian romance of the Renascence, now and then of the mediæval myths of Tannhaüser or the Niblungs. The entire book of *Metamorphoses* is a vivid proof that what we call the Middle Ages were beginning under the early Empire—indeed that the Renascence was interrupted and choked off prematurely by the Christian propaganda which for centuries had a hard struggle with Isis and Mithras. Apuleius would have made a typical Humanist under Leo X.—with all the literary agility, fancy, eloquence, shamelessness, and vital energy of an Aretino or Cellini.

But to grasp the entire contradictions of such a curiously versatile epoch, one ought to read the works of Apuleius entire—and not just pick out *Cupid and Psyche*, nor even the *Golden Ass* alone.

It is quite an exploded error that Romance is a modern invention, unknown to the ancients. Perhaps small parts of the "six shilling novels" of Greece and Rome have survived. But a few have passed the monastic censorship; and one wonders how the *magister scriptorii* of mediæval monasteries was induced to sign his *imprimatur*, or rather his *scribatur*, to the *Daphnis and Chloe* of Longus. This sweet and very pagan story was written in Greek in the Eastern Empire long after the formal adoption of Christianity, about the time when Jerome composed the *Vulgate* and Augustine wrote the *City of God*. There is not in the prose idyll a trace of anything Christian, of anything, indeed, but pure Hellenic naturalism. It is one of the marvels of literary history that Greek imaginative work was continuous from Homer to Longus, with little break in the continuity of language and even of tone, over no less than thirteen or fourteen centuries. Comte thought so much of it that he put the *Daphnis and Chloe*, with Theocritus, in the Library; and, in the Calendar, Longus stands with Theocritus in the month dedicated to Homer and ancient Poetry.

The *Daphnis and Chloe* of Longus, the *Ethiopica* of Heliodorus, a Christian bishop, and the romance of Achilles Tatius, are together in "Bohn's Classical Library" in English. The translation of *Daphnis and Chloe* which I know best is that by Amyot, Paris, 1559, revised and completed by Paul Louis Courier, the mordant pamphleteer, in 1810. In French this charming idyll, the last dying swan song of ancient Greece, makes a pleasant relief as one shakes the mind free from the eternal torrent of up-to-date slang.

Though it is certainly erotic, in the fine Greek sense, the naïve innocence of the two children and the graceful nature of the whole atmosphere are no more evil than a Greek statue in the nude.

The copy which I sometimes take up is the Amyot version, fantastically printed and got up by "Louys Glady," of Pimlico, London, 12mo, 1878, *édition de luxe*, etc., on Turkey paper in parchment. This book is quaintly printed in red and in blue ink alternately, at the Chiswick Press, and my copy is signed by Louys Glady—his motto being *Gládio non Gladi*—and it has a preface by Alexandre Dumas, fils, written in the old French of Amyot: *Entre les escripts traictant des plaisirs d'amour, oncques n'en veis plus gentil et plus plaisant à painctures et couleurs plus fresches que ceste pastorale dy Daphnis et Chloé.* This wonderful introduction is printed alternately in red and blue ink with not more than three words in a line and occupies 24 pages. It is a quaint caprice, but is pleasant to read, the speeches in commas being all in red ink. So curious a romance as the *Daphnis and Chloe* may bear a form so fanciful, and I suppose unique, in its red, white, and blue type, and Dumas fils, writing in the sixteenth-century French, for a London publication of 1878!

I would not let it be supposed that I read all my classics in translations, and have sworn off pure Latin of the great time—especially that I do not care for standard Ciceronian prose. I keep my old school and college Ciceros at hand—*Verrines*, *Philippics*, *Offices*, *Letters*, and so forth, and occasionally turn up a quotation in the old texts. Like others who have had a fair education, I have on my spare shelves the collective works of Greek and Latin classics in single folio or quarto volumes for reference.[1]

[1] *e.g. Ciceronis Opera Omnia*, uno volumine comprehensa. C. T. A. Nobbe. Folio, Nutt. London, 1850;

In his *Latin Literature* (1895)—the most masterly survey of the written language of any nation whatever—Mr. J. W. Mackail has paid a splendid tribute to Cicero as the creator of Latin style:—

"He created a language which remained for sixteen centuries that of the civilised world, and used that language to create a style which nineteen centuries have not replaced, and in some respects have scarcely altered."

I can hardly go as far as that myself, unless this praise be limited to Cicero's later ethical and familiar essays, and is not extended to his earlier political and forensic orations.

Now that I have at last come to years of discretion, there is nothing I find more soothing than Cicero's garrulous commonplaces on *Old Age* and on *Friendship*. Every man who has attained, or hopes to attain, to Old Age, or who has, or who hopes to have, a friend, should read *Cato Major* and *Lælius*. If he has forgotten his Latin, there is a pleasant little duodecimo in the "Golden Treasury" series, the two essays together, translated by E. S. Shuckburgh in 200 pages. A pleasanter book for a quiet elderly man cannot be found. But no one who has been through the fifth form need be stopped from Cicero's really "Lower School" Latin, especially if he gets help from Dr. Shuckburgh's two editions of the *Cato Major* and the *Lælius*, with notes, vocabulary, and illustrations. These are in the "Classical" series, uniform with the translation in the "Golden Treasury" series.

How soothing is it to us octogenarians to read in the orator's stately sentences that we need not regard

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Platonis Opera Omnia. G. Stallbaum. Folio, Nutt. London, 1850.

Of course, one does not read these, but turns up a passage, as in *Poetae Scenici Graeci.* Dindorf, 1846; or, *Corpus Poetarum Latinorum.* London, 1841.

ourselves as useless crocks. He makes Cato say that in his eighty-fourth year he is still listened to in the Senate, and still performs his duty as a citizen. The Republic does not want muscles in all its sons; it needs counsel, experience, moderation from some. Each age of man has its own tasks, its proper powers, and its special happiness. Ours, says old Cato, lies in memory and in a sense of repose derived from long converse with men and things. The illustrious Fabius, he says, had that *gravitas condita comitate*—his dignity was sweetened with courtesy (a good description of Mr. Gladstone!)—*nec senectus mores mutaverat*—age had brought no change in his manners or his character. He certainly retained his alertness, as when he retorted on Salinator, who nearly lost Tarentum—*nisi tu amisisses, nunquam recepissem.*

To sensible men who know how to use their lives, says Cato, old age is by no means hard to bear. But neither wealth nor honours can make it pleasant to the unwise. *Insipienti etiam in summa copia gravis.* How cheering are all the words he uses of *placida et lenis senectus* as the natural end of the *quiete et pure et eleganter actae aetatis.* And then he tells us about Plato who died at his writing-desk in his eighty-first year, about Gorgias working on at 107, and saying to one who asked him how he felt—*nihil habeo quod accusem senectutem*—how Sophocles refuted the charge of senile imbecility by reciting in court the *Œdipus at Colonus*, which he had just written when approaching the age of ninety—*num illud carmen desipientis videretur!* Would that the Gods could have made a few more contemporaries of Sophocles so mad or so senile—at least sufficiently sane to have preserved the hundred and odd plays they allowed to perish.

Don't call us veterans useless, says Cato to his young friends! The helmsman on the ship sits very

quietly at his post, and does not work his muscles like the men at the oar or those aloft on the mast. *Non facit ea quae juvenes: at vero multo majora et meliora facit. Non viribus aut velocitatibus aut celeritate corporum res magnae geruntur, sed consilio, auctoritate, sententia; quibus non modo non orbari, sed etiam augeri senectus solet.*

CHAPTER III

POETS THAT I LOVE

When our thoughts turn from the immortal books of the ancient world to those of the modern, we begin with Dante as the father of European literature, just as all ancient literature sought its ancestry in Homer. To me, Dante has ever been the source and fountain of my love of great imaginative thought—

Tu se'lo mio maestro e il mio autore—

My study of Dante and my love of him and his world of art and thought are of no recent date. It was exactly sixty years ago when I boldly began the study of Italian with Dante for first text-book, being then an undergraduate of Wadham College. And my first master was Count Aurelio Saffi, in 1849, one of the three triumvirs with Mazzini, who maintained the heroic defence of Rome so well described by Mr. George Trevelyan in his *Life of Garibaldi*. When, in 1856, I was a student for the Bar in London, I continued my lessons in Dante under Campanella, of Milan, stern Republican of the Revolution, another colleague of Mazzini.

Thus it comes that my interest in the language, history, literature, and aspirations of Italy are all concentrated in Dante, and are idealised in his poem,

and in memory they are coloured by my youthful enthusiasm for the Mazzinian vision of a great *Risorgimento*. When I was living in my father's house, my evening devotions included, perhaps even not seldom consisted of, a canto of the *Commedia*, which, having a fine baritone voice, I would often chant in my bedroom before I went to sleep. A dear old grandmother who lay on the same floor, and was disturbed in mind rather than in body by these vespers, warned my parents that at Oxford I had been "perverted" to Rome, for I used to say my prayers in Latin.

In the 'fifties we had to hammer out our Dante with but few of the translations, commentaries, and "aids" which in this last half century have been poured out in floods, Italian, French, German, English, American, and Greek. I had that excellent prose version of the *Inferno*, by John A. Carlyle, brother to Thomas, a version which Froude, in 1884, declared to be "the best that exists." Of course, too, we had Cary, which perhaps is still the most useful of the verse translations; but I cannot go with Ruskin's wild outburst that it is grander than *Paradise Lost*. Although men of far higher poetic gifts than Cary have since tried their hand at verse translations, the difficulties are so great, and any attempt to convey the liquid vowels of the *terza rima* into our English endings are so truly impracticable, that I doubt if Cary for verse will easily be superseded.

But my counsel is to begin Italian literature with the *Inferno*, and to use a prose translation. I did this, just as at nine years I began the study of Greek with the *Iliad*. Dante is very difficult indeed to master the sense, but not so, simply for the words. Thus :—

> Fecemi la divina potestate,
> La somma sapienza e il primo amore—

is a very hard saying to accept, and this dogma has been the crux of Theology ever since the time of Thomas Aquinas. But no one who can construe a Latin *Delectus* can mistake the words of Dante, which are almost plain Latin. With a quite literal translation on the opposite page, the *Inferno* is not at all difficult in language. The admirably faithful and Biblical prose of John Carlyle in the *Inferno* has been continued for the *Purgatorio* and *Paradiso* in the same excellent way by Arthur J. Butler, of Trinity College, Cambridge, who has now completed the entire poem (1880-1892). And then for those who have leisure for still more elaborate explanation and need more special help, there are the learned *Readings in Dante*, by the Hon. W. Warren Vernon, in six volumes, to which he has devoted more than twenty-five years of his life. To master the whole product of this great hereditary Dantist is to acquire an education in mediæval history.

In order to begin the study of Dante, I say, use a prose translation, of which there are many in these days. But the prose version which helped me most was that of the Abbé Lamennais, in rather antique French (Paris, 3 vols., 8vo, 1856). The close relation of old Italian and early French makes the transposition perfectly natural and obvious :—

> Per me si va tra la perduta gente—.
> Par moi l'on va chez la race perdue—.

seem to me mere variations of one language. Using this version, and with J. Carlyle and Cary, I worked away on the text, which I interleaved, and therein recorded my personal reflections on the ethical and religious problems raised by the poem. In those days, when I was still in my twenties, I ought to have been engrossed in Law reports ; so, perhaps, if Dante

ruined my professional prospects, he did me good as a man.

But now the young Dantist has a plethora of books to turn for help—the massive learning of Dr. Scartazzini, in four volumes, the noble essay of Dean Church, the studies of J. Addington Symonds, of Dr. E. Moore, of W. M. Rossetti, of Charles Eliot Norton, of Dante G. Rossetti, of Walter Pater, of Philip Wicksteed and Paget Toynbee, and the various translations of Longfellow, Plumptre, Dr. Shadwell, and I know not how many more. I have them all, and try them all in turn. And then there is that invaluable edition of Dr. Moore — Dante's entire *Works*, verse and prose, Latin and Italian, which in 430 pages gives in a single volume every word of the poet that we possess; and in the wonderful Oxford India paper this is a volume hardly larger than a collection of sonnets. As a younger man I used to carry about the Pickering print of the *Commedia*, in diamond type, a miniature volume which would go in a waistcoat pocket, and could be used on a railway journey. I had the entire set of these *bijou* Pickerings, classics, Shakespeares and all, and I believe I could use them still. But when I reached old age my wife insisted on my giving them away—a sacrifice I still deplore. But really the thin Oxford (Moore's) Dante ought to be small enough for any one. And nothing can be handier and daintier than the three volumes of the "Temple Classics," edited by Israel Gollancz, with translations and notes by Philip Wicksteed, Thomas Okey, H. Oelsner, and Mabel Lawrence. To be ignorant of Dante now is a mark of neglected education.

After all, the essential for Dante is to read him through—not in choice episodes as they did fifty or a hundred years ago, but all together, as an encyclopædia

of knowledge and of meditation. The chief object is to try to realise what the greatest mind of the Middle Ages had to tell to the modern world that was about to be born. Englishmen will not admit that Dante was the greatest of all poets, nor will Greek scholars admit it. But no one doubts that Dante was the mightiest philosopher who ever used poetry as his instrument of thought, and also the most profound poet who ever idealised the whole cycle of previous history and learning. I remember a curious instance of the difficulty of mastering the full meaning of the *Commedia*. I was reading the *Purgatorio* with Campanella, himself a man of letters, when, having finished one canto, I proposed to go on to the next. "No!" said my scrupulous teacher; "I have not made a study yet of the canto you propose to read. No Italian scholar would pretend to make Dante clear to a student until he had given his mind to it, and had refreshed his memory of all the historic allusions."

In Dante there is far more of philosophy, of religion, of history, than in any other poet since the world began, ancient or modern. In the grand passage with which Dean Church opens his *Essay*:—

> The *Divina Commedia* is one of the landmarks of history. More than a magnificent poem, more than the beginning of a language and the opening of a national literature, more than the inspirer of art, and the glory of a great people, it is one of those rare and solemn monuments of the mind's power.

And so say all of us to whom Dante is the New Bible.

Not only have I used almost all the editions, translations, and commentaries of Dante published in the last sixty years, but I wrote a *Life* of the poet for our *Calendar of Great Men*. I have seen the

original drawings in the imperial edition at Sudbury Park, on which Lord Vernon lavished his time and fortune. I have seen the portrait in the Bargello and the reputed house of Dante in the Via San Martino. And in 1859, under the guidance of Count Cappi, friend of Byron and the Gambas, I made a pilgrimage to the Tomb of the poet at Ravenna. So that I am proud to be able to say—*sono anche io Dantista.*

Devoted from youth to Dante as I am, I have never given much thought to Petrarch, Ariosto, nor Tasso, beyond taking them up occasionally in tempting editions. I have always had at hand the beautiful Pickering print of *Orlando Furioso*, edited by Antonio Panizzi, 1834; but in spite of the exhortations of Dr. Bridges, and the known admiration of Comte, who classed Ariosto with Homer and Dante for enjoyment, I never got further than a canto or two. I have the translations of Sir John Harington and of Hoole, but they only prove the impossibility of putting the charm of Italian verse into English poetry. And when I take up the English *Jerusalem* of Fairfax or of Hoole, it almost turns me against Tasso himself. I am quite alive to the lovely music of the poet, and I did justice to it when I wrote the *Life* of Tasso for the *Calendar*. But I said "his honeyed cadences are apt to pall upon the masculine taste." Much as I love chivalric ballads and romantic adventures, the *literary epic* is an exotic which I fail to enjoy. If I am ever tempted to open my Tasso it is in the sumptuous antique copy I have—a folio in the original parchment binding—printed in double *pica* type, 32 lines to a tall folio page, with tremendous illustrations in contemporary plates. Its title-page runs thus: *Gerusalemme Liberata—Con le figure di Giambatista Piazzetta—Venezia, 1745—Giambatista Albrizzi.* But the trouble with these

mighty folios is that one needs a cathedral lectern to hold them.

A word or two for Boccaccio, for I am not about to restrict the term *poetry* to verse. Poetry includes all *making* of imaginative creations in any form. And the *Decamerone* is the *Humana Commedia* of Italian prose, its type and prime source. I have always read my Boccaccio in the exquisite edition printed by Pickering, London, 3 vols., 1825, and edited by Ugo Foscolo. I do not believe that in eighty-five years British typographers have produced a volume more pleasant to the eye. After hundreds of rivals in all the languages of Europe, the Florentine tales of the Seven Ladies and their three Courtiers retain their inimitable freshness, grace, and charm. The spontaneous birth of a prose style of limpid ease in the fourteenth century in Italy, centuries before organic prose was written in Spain, France, England, or Germany, is one of the problems of history and a landmark of modern prose literature.

As to Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia*, I can just take it up in a curious old edition of his *Works*, 3 vols., 1725, that I have in the original binding, with quaint woodcuts and tail-pieces, rather to see how slowly in Europe a prose style developed than for any interest in the interminable and tangled tales which strangely delighted his sister and the contemporaries of Spenser and Shakespeare. Philip Sidney as a hero yes! but as a prose romancer he is more than I can stand.

If we are to have the old-world romances, let us take it in the form of *Fabliaux ou Contes du xii^e^ et du xiii^e^ siècle*. I do not mean in the scholarly texts of Montaiglon and Raynaud, 6 vols., 1872-1890. I have no time to get up old French, and I am no antiquarian linguist; and I am too lazy to get familiar even with Chaucer, the great poet of *Fabliaux*. No! I read the prose version, translation, and adaptation of the old

songs by Le Grand d'Aussy, 1779, which I have in four delightful volumes with the contemporary binding and plates. The notes of Le Grand are an essential part of the book, which is a picture of the feudal, troubadour, popular side of the Middle Ages, as the *Divine Comedy* and Saint Bernard's *Letters* are of the spiritual and intellectual side. Here is the *esprit Gaulois* in all its audacious profanity, its nakedness, its *diablerie* —prophetic of Rabelais, Voltaire, and Diderot. How democratic, how revolutionary, how anti-clerical are these bold jests. Was there ever a madder bit of wit than the *Villain qui gagna Paradis en plaignant*, or that of the *Jongleur en Enfer*, or the *L'Anneau nuptial de la Vierge*? We hardly conceive such Voltairean ribaldry as possible in the Ages of Faith; but in spite of all the monkeries, and sermons, and penances, and excommunications of Holy Church, throughout all the centuries between Claudian and Diderot, there was never wanting an audience, both popular and scholarly, for the freest wit and the wildest cynicism of the ancient as well as of the modern world.

And the *Fabliaux*, which Comte, for historical reasons, included in his Positivist Library, alongside of the four great poets of the Italian Renascence, certainly have their serious side. Le Grand did his work excellently well. I can read the famous tale of Patient Griselda in his version even after reading Boccaccio's rather overpraised concluding piece in *Giornata Decima*, *Novella X.* And to my taste, the *Aucassin et Nicolette*, as told by Le Grand in vol. ii., p. 180, is as good as any other form of the immortal tale. And as to grim tragedy I know nothing better than *La Châtelaine de Vergy* in vol. ii., p. 196, which is as fierce and redolent of troubadour love, jealousy, and revenge as anything in poetry. For my part, I would read these romances of feudal times and the

Courts of Love in prose rather than in verse. The quaint naïveté of old French prose is far more real and living than any kind of verse, which the exigencies of metre must make more or less artificial.

My love for the romance of the Spanish Cid Campeador dates from childhood, when in the fine old *Penny Magazine* of the 'forties I enjoyed Sir George Dennis' Chronicle and Ballads of the national hero—

Rodericus, mio Cid semper vocatus.

Good old "Penny Mag"! My boyish ideas of chivalry were nurtured on its "Cid," its *Nibelunglied*, and English Ballads with spirited woodcuts. The true way to read the *Poem of the Cid* is in the fine quarto volume by Damas Hinard, Paris, 1858, made for the Empress Eugénie, having the text of the whole poem, 3740 lines, with literal French version on the opposite page and annotations. I have also a French translation by St. Albin, 1865, and a pretty and handy version, part verse, part prose, by John Ormsby, 1879. This little volume is by the author of the splendid English *Don Quixote*, in 4 vols., 1885. Ormsby's neat handbook must lead a reader to the entire poem in the original. Old poems can be translated only in prose. And I always hold the *Poem of the Cid*, perhaps composed not very much later than the hero who was a contemporary of William the Conqueror, to be the earliest of the national romances of Europe, and to be one of the most genuine pictures of early Feudal life that has come down to us. Its native realism is far more true than the modern adaptations of Spanish Ballads; and Ormsby is as safe a guide as we can have. How effective is the fanciful and no doubt late heraldic shield from the tomb—the crossed swords Colade and Tizon, the field *vert*, enclosed in the chain of sentence, and in the centre

hangs the Greek cross which held a fragment of the true cross. The historic Cid was a compound of all three sons of our own Conqueror, with a dash of Cœur de Lion, and a figure more worthy of belief than the superfine hero of the later poets. After the grim old *Poem*, Lockhart's Cid Ballads read like words for a modern song, and Corneille's Cid smacks of C. Perrault's *Contes*.

A favourite mediæval book of mine was Froissart's *Chronicles*, translated by Thomas Johnes, 2 vols., 4to, 1839, with abundant illustrations, occasionally copied, but too often "adapted," from contemporary illuminated MSS. I think that, in my school days, I read through these huge quartos of 1500 pages more than once, and the pictures, badly "faked" as they were, remain in my eyes to this hour. My prize essay at K.C.S. on the Age of Edward III., I know, was largely drawn from these fascinating volumes. I have the Monstrelet of the same series, also by Thomas Johnes, 2 vols., 4to, 1840. It never enchanted me as did the Froissart. When we get into the fifteenth century the colour and the spell of the Middle Ages have gone. However, for a schoolboy, the four volumes, covering the history of Europe from 1326 to 1516, was a very fair compendium of mediæval annals, especially in the personal and biographical form of Froissart and Monstrelet. Ugh! with what gritty manuals, full of dates, genealogies, and maps, are lads stuffed, like geese for *pâtés de foie gras*, when being crammed on a narrow "period" for their next exam.!

My own interest in the Catholic and Feudal Ages has always lain in the poetic and artistic side of it, not on the historic records of events—in Michaud's *Croisades*, Milman's *Latin Christianity*, some chronicles in Migne's *Patrologia*, and the art work of Paul

Lacroix, of Jules Labarte, Viollet-le-Duc, and Ruskin. One who will try to make a serious study of the Gothic cathedrals of Europe, of the ancient castles and city remains, with competent books of reference—such as Avignon, Carcassonne, Pierrefonds, Verona, Florence —will really understand the Middle Ages better than one who had spent twenty years in spelling out the entire series of the *Patrologia Latina*. Dante, Ariosto, Boccaccio, Fabliaux, chansons, cathedrals, castles, ramparts, and towers—these are the *history* of Catholic Feudalism—there exists no other.

It was, no doubt, my love of the poetry and art of the Middle Ages which has tempered my interest in the two great inimitable satirists of Catholicism and Feudalism—Rabelais and Cervantes. Of course, I admire as much as any one the inexhaustible wit of the Frenchman, and the Shakespearean wisdom and humour of the Spaniard. I feel them both to belong to the forefront of the modern literature of the world. All I mean is that I do not heartily take to them—go back on them—carry them with me on a journey. I have both, in the original and in famous translations, and also I have *Gargantua* and *Pantagruel*, with the illustrations of Gustave Doré, whose fertile and extravagant imagination, with a pencil that defies sanity, decency, and nature alike, seems curiously akin to the madcap genius of Rabelais. I was one of the subscribers to the new translation of 1893, by W. F. Smith, of Cambridge and the Rabelais Club. But with all that I don't take to it.

I remember that as a young man I felt a positive detestation for *Don Quixote*. My sympathies were entirely with the Don, whom I fondly believed to be one of the noblest and sweetest souls in romance. At that age one judges with the heart more than with the head, and I was not philosopher enough to under-

stand that Cervantes ranks with Shakespeare and Molière as having the profoundest knowledge of human nature. It took me years to get over my dislike of practical jokes played upon the heroic knight and lover. I find the Spanish of *Don Quixote* difficult, as I find the French of *Gargantua* difficult, and I use translations for both. And I also possess the quarto edition of *Don Quixote*, with the illustrations of Gustave Doré, which are less extravagant and more locally true than his Rabelais fantasies. I use now for *Don Quixote* the scholarly and graceful translation by John Ormsby, 4 vols., 1885, with *Introduction*, life, and notes. This fine Spanish scholar has now reconciled me to follow the grotesque adventures of the chevalier. And I quite see the truth of Comte's judgment of "that marvellous composition, in which Cervantes so naturally gathers all the family affections round a character of the most eccentric individuality, striking out at the same time, though he was not aware of it, the true theory of madness, *i.e.*, of subjective ideas overwhelming objective impressions, and so running wild without regard to external facts!"

The French *Fabliaux* verbally recall *Fables* in our sense, though of course the *Fabliaux* are mainly romances in verse, with occasional *Fables*, such as *Le Chien et le Serpent*, *i.e.* the story of Llewelyn and his dog Gelert. The original of this is Eastern, and is adapted from the fables of Pilpay, or Bid-pai, the Hindoo Æsop. The larger part of the Fables known to Europe, and very many of the romances, such as that of Tell or Griselda, were drawn from the East. The Pilpay fables are the residuum of Eastern moral lessons that go back far beyond Æsop or any Greek or European source. They come to us from Indian, then Persian, and Italian and French adaptations. I know not if any one now reads Pilpay. I fear that

Research has smothered up old Bídpái in learned disquisitions about language. But I read the quaint stuff in a dirty old 12mo, an English version, 1789, with coarse primitive woodcuts to each fable, which keeps the original calf binding. A frowsy little book not worth one shilling at an open bookstall, with its faded type, absurd eighteenth-century woodcuts, and the racy talk that Swift made familiar. To my mind, the easy vernacular of the English and the childish pictures at every other page, fall in with the homely wit and wisdom and the primeval good sense of the immortal "beast-epic."

I am free to admit that Bídpái, whom nobody now reads for amusement, is often quite as good as Æsop, sometimes better as far nearer to the mind of our Fetichist ancestors, who trained for us the dog, the cat, the horse, and the cow. As for Æsop, I read him in a tall folio (really a modern facsimile, of course of no bibliographical value, but exactly reproducing an original), the *Fables of Æsop and other eminent Mythologists, with Morals and Reflections, by Sir Roger L'Estrange, Kt., London, 1669.* . . . It has a wonderful frontispiece representing the dwarf and hunch-backed fabulist, surrounded by all manner of beasts, and inscribing his roll *utile dulci*. The text is printed very black, in "great primer," about 40 lines to a tall folio—headings are in very big "Old English" type, and the calf binding is a facsimile of that of 1669. This is just the book to recall our childish delight in the immortal apophthegms. I enjoy the rowdy knight's King Charles II. slang.

As a Cock was turning up a Dunghill, he spy'd a *Diamond*. Well (says he to himself), this sparkling Foolery now to a Lapidary in my place, would have been the Making of him; but as to any purpose of mine, a *Barley-Corn* had been worth Forty on't.

L'Estrange's vernacular is that which an old carter might use in a roadside tavern.

A slam (? slim) Thin-Gutted *Fox* made a hard shift to Wriggle his Body into a Hen-Roost, and when he had Stuff'd his Guts well, he squeez'd hard to get out again ; but the Hole was too Little for him. There was a *Weazle* a pretty way off, that stood Learing at him all This While. Brother *Reynard* (says he), Your Belly was Empty when you went In, and you must e'en stay till Your Belly be Empty again, before you come Out.

Did Thomas Carlyle get his love of capitals from Sir Roger ?

I rather prefer to read old books as nearly as possible in the form of the original, always providing the spelling or the antique language does not get troublesome, for I am no student of archaic style, and too busy to get up Anglo-Saxon, Old French, or Old English. And as I have neither the taste nor the purse to indulge in rare first editions, I am ashamed to confess that I am content with a facsimile reprint. Now and then a bibliographical friend presents me with a fine old copy, which I guard with care, and now and then open. One such is an early quarto edition of the Epistles of S. Catherine of Siena—*Epistole et Orationi della seraphica vergine Santa Catherina da Siena—In Vinetia appresso Federico Toresano, MDxlviii.* This book was printed at Venice the year following the reign of our Henry VIII., in 305 pp., double column, *con la sua tavola, i.e.*, with a quaint portrait of the Seraphic Virgin being crowned with three crosses by two angels. The inscription above her image runs thus : *Transit (? Transiit) ad sponsum tribus exornata coronis*, she holding in the right hand the crucifix, the martyr's palm, her lily emblem, and her book of Epistles ; in

the left hand she holds the burning heart of Jesus—but no *stigmata* are visible. In it are various Epistles to Popes Gregory XI. and Urban VI. from "*Catherina indegna e miserabile vostra figliola: serva e schiava di servi di Jesu Christo.*" Then follow letters to cardinals, nuntios, abbots, and fathers, whom she stimulates and lectures as if she were headmistress of a high school, even writing so to an archbishop. She certainly induced the miserable Gregory to leave Avignon. She preaches to the King of France as if she were his Father Confessor. I turned to the famous Letter of Catherine to Brother Raymond, of Capua, Letter cii., p. 92, describing her consolation given to Nicolas Tuldo, a young man of Perugia, executed at Rome, whom she visited in prison, assisted on the scaffold as his confessor, and took up his bloody head in her bosom. The story is given by Milman, in *Latin Christianity*, v. 391.

This is the story of the saint's intense love and charity, immortalised in Swinburne's beautiful poem, Siena :—

> And the house, midway hanging, see
> That saw Saint Catherine bodily,
> Felt on its floors her sweet feet move,
> And the live light of fiery love
> Burn from her beautiful strange face,
> As in the sanguine sacred place
> Where, in pure hands, she took the head
> Severed, and with pure lips still red
> Kissed the dead lips.

But it is interesting to read her ecstatic letter about the culprit being taken up to Christ, in a book printed in Italy, in the year of our first Protestant king, and in the heyday of Loyola and Saint Theresa.

Another fine old book that we owe to a bibliographical friend is Corneille's verse translation or paraphrase of the *Imitation*, of 1658. It is a quarto in

its original stout binding *L'Imitation de Jesus-Christ par P. Corneille, Rouen, par L. Maurry, m.dc.lviii.* It has some good plates—Christ giving the Sermon on the Mount, the Annunciation, the Call of Peter, and the Last Supper, all by F. Chauneau. I don't know if they read Corneille's paraphrase now; it is in the Positivist Library, and I have it in modern reprints. But it is interesting to read it in a volume published at Rouen in the lifetime of the poet under his own eyes. There is no lofty verse certainly in the paraphrase—but it has ample evidence of what Corneille himself called his *plume facile.* Here is a specimen :—On the Sacrament, Book iv., c. 2 :

> Je cherche en altéré la fontaine de vie,
> Je cherche en affamé le pain vivifiant,
> Et c'est sur cet espoir que mon âme ravie
> Au Monarque du Ciel presente un mandiant.

The Latin in the margin reads thus :—

—accedo aeger ad Salvatorem, esuriens et sitiens ad fontem vitae, egenus ad Regem Cœli.

For my part, Corneille and Comte notwithstanding, I much prefer the original Latin.

Because I occasionally take up the profane *facetiae* of the *Fabliaux*, or a Rabelais, or smile at the gross vernacular of L'Estrange, it must not be assumed that I have ceased to care for serious and even devotional books. Besides the *Imitation* by Corneille I have I don't know how many editions, both Latin and English. One is the text printed from the original autograph (so called), Berlin, 1874; another is a Leipsic edition of the Latin text, 1867, sm. 8vo, pp. 346, each page of text being inclosed in broad square margins of illustrations well copied from German manuscript pictures. Another very pleasant edition is the English version, published by Kegan, Paul & Co.,

12mo, 1881, as one of the Parchment Series of Handbooks, with a fine engraved frontispiece by Sir W. Richmond. This is beautifully printed at the Chiswick Press, and is a really dainty book to handle and pleasant to the eye.

It happens that I have a personal interest in this edition, which, after thirty years have passed since its publication, I need not scruple to make public. Mr. Kegan Paul, an old friend of mine, and once closely in touch with our Positivist body, took much interest in the new edition of the *Imitation*, which he was commissioned by Cardinal Newman, of the Oratory, to publish. Kegan Paul came to me one day and asked me if I would undertake the English translation for the Cardinal. I naturally hesitated, saying that his Eminence would hardly care to put it in my hands. "I have already consulted him," said Kegan Paul, "and he is quite willing to have you as a translator—adding that he would himself see that the theology was sound, and all that he wanted was an accurate translation in perfectly pure English." I confess my modesty shrank from such a test of my literary resources, and I declined the responsibility. But I have always remembered it as one of the most graceful compliments which I ever received since I could hold a pen.

Neither Dante, nor à Kempis, nor Cardinal Newman, "converted" me to Catholicism, for I am just as fond of my Milton. And I am a devout believer in the great Puritan Allegory of John Bunyan, which Macaulay declares to be the only work of its class with a strong human interest. Dr. Johnson, Tory and critic as he was, said the *Pilgrim's Progress* was one of the few books he could read to the end, and he wished it had been longer. There I think Johnson was wrong, for the allegory, as Macaulay

shows, will not bear to be spun out to minute analogies. I hope every one knows Macaulay's *Essay* on Bunyan, one of the best in his whole series; for his great knowledge of the age and his political and religious detachment enable him, as Whig and moderate Churchman, to judge the Puritan enthusiast truly.

What is so strange of Bunyan's book is, that Catholics, Calvinists, Anglicans, and Agnostics all alike fall under its spell. There is even a Catholic *Pilgrim's Progress*, omitting Giant Pope, and there are translations in almost every known language. Comte put Bunyan beside à Kempis, and at Newton Hall we made a pilgrimage to his grave in Bunhill Fields and to his prison at Bedford. And we joined in raising the Memorial to him in the Abbey.

Indeed, another of my cheap facsimiles of old books is that of the first edition of *Pilgrim's Progress*, made by Elliot Stock, with great care and meticulous attention to the minutest detail, from the unique extant copy of 1678. The title-page of this curious relic is worth setting out in full.

It is curious that Bunyan uses the word *similitude* —instead of *allegory*. He must have known this word, which occurs once in the Bible, Gal. iv. 24, and is there used correctly for a "figurative discourse" as Johnson explains it. The word *similitude* occurs ten times in the Bible in the narrow sense of "likeness, resemblance" (Johnson); and Bunyan's "Dream" is a true allegory, and not a mere *simile* or *resemblance*. Perhaps the sonorous Greek word seemed to the tinker in prison rather too grand.

The book was published in the crisis of the Popish Plot and the national excitement which preceded the Election of 1679, so powerfully described by Macaulay in his *History*, vol. i. chap. ii.

THE

Pilgrim's Progress

FROM

THIS WORLD,

TO

That which is to Come:

Delivered under the Similitude of a

DREAM

Wherein is discovered,

The manner of his setting out,
His Dangerous journey; And safe
Arrival at the Desired Countrey.

I have used Similitudes, Hos. 12, 10.

By John Bunyan.

Licensed and Entred according to Order.

LONDON,

Printed for *Nath. Ponder* at the *Peacock*
in the *Poultrey* near *Cornhil*, 1678.

Of course the reprint only contains the First Part —with the entrance into Paradise of Hopeful and Christian, and the dismissal to Hell of Ignorance— "Then I saw that there was a way to Hell, even from the Gates of Heaven, as well as from the City of Destruction. So I awoke, and behold it was a Dream." I confess I do not care so much for the Second Part, with Christiana and her children and Mr. Greatheart, though of course it is popular with young people, and has some new and fine things—such as the man with the Muckrake in the Interpreter's House, and other parables; and the land of Beulah, and the end of Christiana are pleasant. But, as a whole, the Second Part is to me too domestic, too much of a good book on Sunday for children, with the Catechism, and oh! the prim marriages on the Pilgrims' Progress to Paradise! What dainty young ladies are the little Christiankins in Stothard's graceful vignettes! It is far too intricate, too like an everyday novel, with a sort of mild Sunday-school tone in the discussions hardly veiled.

I once took the trouble to compare the original of 1678 Part I. with an edition of the completed text issued by the Religious Tract Society from Bunyan's last additions. I found that the added matter filled 35 pages out of 185, nearly one-fifth. The new matter is thus described :—

1. The second paragraph of the opening giving Christian's return home to his wife and children after his cry—"*What shall I do?*" This is a bathos, after the magnificent opening of the Dream. How could Bunyan with his genius for speech adopt the phrase in Acts ii., rather than that in Acts xvi., 30—"What shall I do *to be saved?*" This comes only in the revised edition.

2. Worldly Wiseman of the city Carnal Policy

and his long dialogue (pp. 21-30 inclusive) is not in the first edition ; and it rather hampers the action.

3. Mr. Legality is an added character.

4. Also the dialogue of Charity and Christian.

5. Three pages (103-105)—the dialogue of Evangelist, Faithful, and Christian—is an afterthought.

6. Mr. By-ends' account of the town of Fair-Speech.

7. The whole of the discussion between By-ends, Money-love, and Save-all (pp. 121-127) is new.

8. The story of Lot's wife, Korah, etc. (pp. 130-132).

9. Giant Despair's wife—Diffidence (pp. 136-141).

10. The Shining Company at the gate of the Celestial City (pp. 192-193).

To my taste, all these additions to Bunyan's first draft rather retard the action and the intensity of the picture, and introduce the elements of argumentative homily and of ingenious enigma. We are told that the *Pilgrim's Progress* was originally written as a private meditation in prison, without any thought of publication. The extended version was composed when the author was famous, and it loses the intense simplicity of the first draft. The Second Part, six years later, shares the fate of so many additions to great masterpieces. To my mind, it is what *Paradise Regained* is to *Paradise Lost*. To sum up my impressions, after comparing the original draft of 1678, with the tenth, his final edition of 1685, I distinctly prefer the early and simple forms of the immortal Protestant Divine Comedy. When Bunyan was tempted by his popularity to sermonise and lavish on successive versions his amazing resources of invention, the tremendous sincerity and vitality of his Dream began to be obscured by his own literary versatility. Men should read *Pilgrim's Progress* only in the text

of 1678. Children will always delight in the family picnic of the Second Part, and may be usefully catechised in the various dialogues finally inserted in the original text.

As I opened this paper with Dante, I end it with Milton—the English poet to whom I most often turn. In our *Calendar*, Milton closes the month of Dante; our *Library* includes *Paradise Lost* and the *Lyrical Poems*; and in the *Life* of Milton which I wrote for our volume of Worthies I cited Comte's estimate of "the inimitable Epic as the highest measure of Man's poetic powers." Having had my say about Milton in our joint book of Biographies, I need say no more here about Epic or lyrics. The 500 lines of the three great lyrical poems have, as I wrote, "every quality of poetry in literal perfection," and *Paradise Lost* has "music and conceptions even more sustained and enthralling, such as Shakespeare, Dante, and Homer alone can match."

In the 'forties, at King's College School, we had to learn by heart books of the *Paradise Lost*, which we studied critically, with annotations, "parallel passages," and other stuff of the kind, which perhaps did us more harm than good. At Wadham, on the appearance of my name in the Class List of Easter, 1853, the college presented me with the *Works* of Milton, in the handsome edition of 1851, 8 vols. 8vo, printed by William Pickering, from the original editions, with the *Life* by John Mitford. This sumptuous book was solidly bound in antique calf, with the college arms on the cover, and old Ben Symons' Latin inscription. It has been my lifebelt in the storms of modern literature now for almost sixty years, though I fear it has ruined my spelling for life, for the poet wrote—

And justifie the wayes of God to men

Years ago at Newton Hall I led a pilgrimage to visit the tomb of the poet in St. Giles', Cripplegate: and on another occasion to the antique cottage at Chalfont to which he retreated during the plague and wrote his *Paradise Regained.* To Milton I say—

> What in me is dark illumine,
> What is low raise and support.

CHAPTER IV

GREAT BIOGRAPHIES

If twenty well-read men and women were asked to name the greatest Biography in ancient and then in modern literature, nineteen of them would reply off-hand—Why, Plutarch's *Lives* and Boswell's *Johnson*. Everybody has read these two books from their earliest days; and the highest authorities since Montaigne, Henri IV., Shakespeare, Macaulay, and Carlyle, have agreed that these two are the supreme masters of the fascinating and popular art of writing Lives of famous men.

Montaigne tells us that the *Parallel Lives* alone might form a good education; Henri IV. said, Plutarch was his very conscience to guide him in his public duty; to Shakespeare, in his three ancient plays, Plutarch was what Holinshed was for his "Histories." A French critic calls the *Lives* one of the noblest books of which humanity has to boast; it offers us "an encyclopædia of the ancient world." And it has been said of old—"if all other books were destroyed, we could still recover some picture of antiquity provided Plutarch survived."

And as to Boswell's *Johnson*, similar praises are lavished. "Boswell," says Macaulay, "is the first of biographers. He has no second. He has distanced

all his competitors." Again he adds, though he was a bore, a toady, and a fool, he has written "one of the best books in the world." And Carlyle, who understood Bozzy much better than Macaulay, says that his portrait of Johnson "is a more free, perfect, sunlit and spirit-speaking likeness than for many centuries had been drawn by man of man. Scarcely since the days of Homer has the feat been equalled: indeed, in many senses, this also is a kind of Heroic Poem." And Carlyle does not scruple to say of what he calls the *Johnsoniad*, that Boswell's book, though it is but a memoir of the conversation of one man, will give us more real insight into the *History of England* than twenty books of professed historians. And much the same has been often said—and is more truly said—of Plutarch's *Parallel Lives*.

That being so, says some reader in a hurry (all readers nowadays are in a hurry), why talk about Plutarch and Boswell? Have you anything new to tell us about them? Certainly not! I reply; for I have no pretension to be either scholar, or critic, or professor, or one having authority in things of the mind. All that I have to say about Plutarch, or Boswell, or any one else I mention in these stray papers is: Read them, read them again! My tachydromic and polymathic friend says: I have read them, read them years ago!

Well! we know that; every one has read them in early days; but have you not forgotten all but a few anecdotes, hurried over the wise rules of life, canons of judgment, pregnant maxims of Plutarch the just moralist and of Johnson the downright judge? Of course everyone remembers the story of Aristeides writing his own name on the shell, or of Alcibiades cutting off the tail of his pedigree hound, in order to get into the *Daily Mail* of Athens, or of Alexander

and Bucephalus, or of Alexander and Diogenes in his tub, just as every one knows about Alfred's cakes. But the point I am asking is this: Have you read Plutarch since your school days? Do you really know all his thousand and one pictures of the antique world so well, that you never turn to him now in later life? I strongly suspect that few persons could honestly say as much.

It would be quite to misunderstand the scope of these occasional notes of mine to look upon them as offering any criticism or essay about famous books, much less as promising anything new about well-known writers. Like the Sapphic but needy knife-grinder, story I have none to tell; nor even so much as any new light of criticism. My only purpose is to tell what I have been reading myself, why I am still in my old age enjoying the old books. As I keep on saying, I am nothing of a scholar and never have been a great reader. But still in my years of leisure and retirement, I am reading over again the famous books of one's youth—am enjoying them hugely, and perpetually find in them things I had forgotten or missed.

There has been of late a happy revival of interest in Plutarch and other writers of Imperial times, whom the pedantry of the latter half of the nineteenth century condemned for their poor Greek and their doubtful Latin. But Mahaffy, and Bury, and Dill, and Warde Fowler, Mackail, Vernon Arnold, H. E. Butler, and others are making these most interesting writers known; and so Plutarch, and Lucian, and Marcus Aurelius, Epictetus, Apuleius, Petronius, Ausonius, Symmachus, and Claudian, and the author of *Pervigilium Veneris* are become again living and familiar voices to us to-day. And we are beginning to see, with no little surprise and misgiving, that these mystics and philosophers, and these cynics and satirists, make

these lively times of imperial decadence more akin to ourselves than the Thucydides and Aristotle, the Livy, Cæsar, and *Cicero de Officiis*, to which in old days our learning was confined. There is now no need to read in the original crabbed Greek either Plutarch, or Marcus Aurelius, or Epictetus. George Long and other scholars have done all these excellently well. Nor need anyone be troubled with late Latin of the silver age now, for the poetry and the prose from Virgil and Cicero down to Ammianus and Boethius are more easily read with good versions in modern tongues. The folly of the older schools, in their zeal for pure Greek and Ciceronian Latin, closed to us books in which we had everything to enjoy and even much to learn.

And now for the Prince of Biographers—I say the Prince—for no other writer has ever written the lives of fifty great men of action extending in time over some seven centuries, ranging in space from the Euphrates to the Tagus, and drawn from an immense library of Memoirs in various languages and of different ages. Besides these fifty Lives there were fourteen others that are lost, and amongst them at least four of prime importance—Epaminondas, Scipio, Augustus, and Tiberius. There is no compendium of history on such a scale unless it be Gibbon's *Decline and Fall.*

No one now trusts Plutarch as an historical authority for events. We have heard enough of his inaccuracies and his credulity, his confusion of dates and even of persons, and his love of gossip in lieu of critical research. But when all this is admitted, what wonderful pictures of men and of a bygone world, what wise reflections, what sound judgment, what a treasury of myth, poetry, anecdote, and maxim. I dare say, as Bury says, Lycurgus was a god, not a man. And Romulus was

as mythical as King Brute. But as kinematographic pictures of ancient Greece, these *Lives* are worth libraries of mere annals. Plutarch being a Greek with a limited knowledge of Rome and of Latin, is not so good with Romans. But his Lives of Aristeides and Themistocles, of Pericles and Alcibiades, of Demosthenes, and, above all, of Alexander, are delightful reading, full of life and thought and wisdom. I can read them again and again to-day. And it is a mistake to think that our school reading of them can still fill the memory, or can have given us all the ethical and political instruction imbedded in them. Historical judgment often comes back to see the substantial truth of Plutarch's estimates. And now Mahaffy, Bury, Adolf Holm, and recent scholars show us how far better a conception of Alexander and his stupendous career and work we can get from Plutarch than if we follow the democratic dogmatism of George Grote. I hold Plutarch's *Alexander* to be the supreme type of biography proper, as applied to the most superbly endowed human being in the story of mankind. Notwithstanding his crimes, vices, and brutalities, let us admit that the human race never begot a son of such superhuman powers of body, mind, and soul; nor does human history record any single man who produced such vast and secular movements over the habitable globe. Julius Cæsar was certainly a better, nobler, and, taking all his powers together, a greater man; and his life was in its far-reaching effects more important to civilisation than even was Alexander's. But Julius had far greater problems to solve and far less favouring conditions; and his mighty achievement of imperial peace and unity was only designed by him; it was developed by his successors from Augustus down to the Antonines.

Plutarch is the greatest of biographers, because he

thoroughly grasped and practised the true principle of biographic work—to make a living portrait of a man's inner nature, not to write the annals of his external acts. The conventional biography records what the person *did*: the true biography reveals what the person *was*. It deals with facts as the key of the nature. "I do not write *histories*," says Plutarch introducing his *Alexander*, "but I write *Lives*; and a slight circumstance, a jest, a word is often a truer index to a man's character than accounts of his bloody victories and tremendous conquests." If Alexander's was the most electric temperament in recorded history, Plutarch's portrait of him is the most masterly portrait ever painted with the pen of a historian—far more true, more real, and more graven on the memory of ages, than are the laborious studies of all the annalists ancient and modern.

For the same reasons, the modern world has given the crown of biography to Boswell's *Johnson*. Plutarch was essentially a moralist, an umpire of ethics, not a politician, and certainly not a historian. And so was the Doctor. It is always in biography the ἠθικὴ πίστις which tells. We need not compare Boswell with Homer, as did Carlyle with his raucous exaggeration, for a "history of England" which leaves out Walpole, Chatham, Burke, and Washington, is rather a one-sided affair. Still, in a small duodecimo way, and making a portrait, not of a founder and statesman, but of a scholar and a talker, Bozzy, by a sort of dog-like instinct of worshipping his master, did achieve, in a literary and miniature form of art, something of what Plutarch did on a grander canvas and a far mightier world. All I have to say is—put aside your *Lives of the Royal Laundrywomen*, your *Gossip about the Stage*, and try if you cannot take up again for a spare hour your Plutarch and your Boswell.

On a smaller scale, no doubt, Southey's *Nelson*, Johnson's *Lives of Poets* (the Six Best, selected by Matthew Arnold), Gibbon's *Autobiography*, Carlyle's Essays on *Goethe*, *Burns*, and *Johnson* have that inimitable charm of painting men as revealed to the eye of genius, rather than tabulating the facts of their external actions. On the other hand laborious annals, such as Coxe's *Walpole*, Francis Thackeray's *Chatham*, Lord Stanhope's *Pitt*, Masson's *Milton*, and even Carlyle's *Cromwell*, are just what biographies should not be. It is fair to say that Masson did not profess to write a *Life* of Milton, nor did Carlyle profess to write a *Life* of Cromwell. Both wrote of the contemporaries and the times. Would that Carlyle had written a *Life* of Cromwell! A full and great *Life* of Cromwell is still to seek, in spite of all the studies and sketches of late years. But as to Stanhope's *Pitt*, and Masson's *Milton*, how many persons read them through from cover to cover—much less who takes them up for a second or a third reading? They are repertories—not biographies. Now Pattison's *Milton*, and Morley's *Burke*, are real and enduring *Lives*.

To me no life of man, from the time of Adam till that of King George, is so fascinating as that of the noblest, best, purest, wisest man in all recorded history—our own sacred hero, Alfred—the only name of a chief in all human annals on whose memory no blot, no defect, moral, intellectual, or even mythical has ever been alleged. The Millenary Commemoration of 1901, when the great monument was raised at Winchester, brought about a new interest in Alfred's life and writings; and a great amount of fresh light was thrown on what was obscure. Dryasdust, of course, raised big clouds and erudite fog which almost veiled again the mighty figure of our greatest man. What on earth does it matter whether he died in A.D.

900 or 901—whether he could not read till his twelfth year, and whether *legit* means "read Latin" or "read" at all? Fortunately we now know enough to make Alfred's personality vivid, complete, and certain.

We have no single adequate biography to which we can entirely trust. For my part, I have always held the contemporary *Life* attributed to Asser to be substantially both genuine and true, in spite of a good deal of confusion and interpolation. I am quite satisfied by the very careful and learned researches of Charles Plummer as to the way in which we should read Asser; and for myself I have nothing to amend in the sketches of Alfred's career which I wrote in 1891, and again in 1901. The well-known *Life* by Pauli is now sixty years old, and was compiled before the researches of our own time; but it is a useful and memorable book, if used with caution and subsequent discoveries.

But the true *Life* of Alfred will always be in his own writings, and especially in his *Boethius*, which can now be read in the original Anglo-Saxon, critically edited by Walter J. Sedgefield (Oxford, 1899), and in his excellent English translation (Oxford, 1900). This beautiful book, now open to the English reader in a dainty form, must ever stand beside the *Meditations* of Marcus Aurelius, as the outpouring of soul by a royal saint. It was the happy idea of Mr. Sedgefield to print in italics those parts of Alfred's *Boethius*, which are not in the Latin text, but are the king's own reflections on life, duty, and religion (and I think these amount to nearly one-tenth in bulk). They are amongst the most noble passages to be found in the last immortal work of antiquity. These enable us to see into the inmost spirit of the best of kings and the bravest of saints. It is a book to stand beside the *Imitation* in spiritual elevation, and yet it is the private

manual of a hero who in battle would "charge up hill on the foe as if he were a wild boar."

I love contrasts; indeed, I hold that it is well to vary our reading by turning to widely different subjects. Not only on my bookshelves does Aristophanes stand beside my Dante, and Haeckel near to Confucius, but I think one ought to follow up a study of morals and religion by a dose of poetry or satire—*Gulliver*, *Tom Jones*, or *Don Juan*. As to history, I like to turn from Herodotus to Gibbon, from Gardiner to Michelet. And I do not care so much as Plutarch did for *Parallel Lives* (and absurd parallels he made of some). Not only is it pleasant but it is really instructive to *contrast* lives, to compare dissimilar lives, natures, and types. And after a turn at Saint Louis we may take up Cellini, or beside a Turgot we may listen to Rousseau. All of these were men of genius, who represented their age with wonderful life. There was a great deal of human nature in all of them. Let us have no *Index Expurgatorius* in our libraries.

By way of contrast I turn from Asser's *Alfred* to a very different set of studies, just one hundred years later, dealing with a marvellously different civilisation at the other side of Europe—in Africa and in Asia—and narrated in huge tomes of portentous learning and research. I mean the magnificent works of Gustave Schlumberger on Byzantine history of the latter half of the tenth century and the first part of the eleventh century.[1]

These four sumptuous volumes, full of facsimiles, illustrations, maps, views and photographs, form an encyclopædia of Byzantine archæology.

[1] "Un Empereur Byzantin," 10me siècle, Paris, 4to, 1890; "L'Epopée Byzantine" (969-989), Paris, 4to, 1896; "Basile ii. Bulgaroctonus," Paris, 4to, 1900; "Les Porphyrogénètes, Zoe et Theodora" (1025-1057), Paris, 4to, 1905.

How wonderful a gulf stands between the world of Alfred and that of Theophano and her terrible son, "the Slayer of the Bulgarians." And yet men might have known both; and some of Alfred's warriors and some of his Viking foes bred the best guards of Basil's throne. What a contrast as one turns from Asser and his Saxon Chronicle to Schlumberger's pictures of a magnificent Empire in decadence —from the naïf, rude, new-born Kingdom of Wessex to the superfine luxury, wealth, art, literature, and pomp of a vast State which had rioted in its accumulated resources for a thousand years. Yet we find, too, Alfred and the Kinglets, around him and opposed to him, trying to pick up the crumbs that fall from the over-laden treasuries and factories, and arts, and science, and literature that had taken refuge in the stronghold of Byzantium, as an Ark in the deluge of barbarism. Both Saxons and East Romans professed the same faith, used the same Bible, and followed the same customs. What thrilling adventures, catastrophes, dramas fill the annals of these Basileis and Augustas; what a world of poetry and art had rolled down in one continuous stream for the twenty centuries which separate the heroes of the Iliad from Basil ii. And of all this Alfred and his learned priests knew nothing but a vague report. Let us think of Asser's monkish picture of Alfred composing his books and studying his Latin like a schoolboy in rude primers—and side by side put the picture of Theophano and Zoe and Theodora flaunting their bloody extravagances in a sort of Versailles on the Bosporus. And yet, as the centuries rolled on, Alfred and his people had painfully to learn a thousand imperishable things from these very Byzantine palaces, churches, and libraries. Nay, in 1911, King George V., in order to be duly crowned, had to repeat the imperial

formulas and copy the Church ritual of the Constantines "Born in the Purple."

One of the chief scholars of our age, Professor Bury of Cambridge, has devoted his immense learning to clear up the chaos of Byzantine history, until now hidden in foreign, obscure, and Oriental Sources.

By all means let us study the Lives of the foremost men and women in the ages past; but not parallel—in the sense of similar—Lives. Rather let us set side by side the dissimilar. And so we may grasp the miraculous complexity of civilisation and the bewildering multiplicity of human capacities. For some years of my life I was occupied with editing a biographical dictionary containing Lives of 558 men of eminence—reaching from Moses to Hegel, and including men even further apart in life and in work than were Moses and Hegel. And I do not know that any task of my life proved to be more enjoyable, or has taught me more.

And then in the very age of the worse decadence and confusion of that Byzantine Empire, of which Schlumberger has given us such lurid pictures, we have perhaps the most noble portrait ever painted of a feudal Chief in the *Memoirs* of Joinville. He was the finest type of chivalry at its highest moment, with certainly the longest experience of any mediæval leader, for he was born in the lifetime of Saint Francis, and he died only two years before Dante, aged 95. His *Memoirs* form one of the most important documents of the great thirteenth century of which he is the best representative. His *Life of Saint Louis*, translated by J. Hutton, in a neat and accessible form in the "Bayard Series" is a wonderful portrait of the only mediæval ruler who can be put beside our Alfred—though how far beneath our Alfred in practical wisdom and true manliness—for Alfred

lived when the great Feudal-Catholic world was in its rise and Saint Louis, four hundred years later, when it was spent or in decline.

And along with Joinville's *St. Louis*, in the same duodecimo series, may be read the *Life of Bayard*, by the "Loyal Servitor," translated by E. Walford. It is a delightful book, giving a splendid picture of the last gleam of that age of knighthood which all over Europe had ended in an orgy of pride, crime, and blood. But the Chevalier, "without fear and without stain," presents to us a beautiful career of loyalty, courtesy, heroism and piety—the last example of a chivalry which had lasted for good and for evil during four centuries. When I summed up the record of his life as told by his devoted "servitor" (in the week of Charlemagne reserved for Crusaders) my words were—"he was pious, generous, unselfish, modest, temperate, pure, and magnanimous. His courage and prowess in arms were those of a knight of romance; his generosity was princely, and his courtesy unfailing." Read the *Loyal Servitor*, and see if these words are too strong.

For a contrast to the story of Bayard we have the *Memoirs* of Philippe de Comines. How significant is the contrast. They were almost contemporaries, served the same French Monarchy, both fought in the French wars in Italy; and yet they have utterly different standards of life and thought. Bayard is more than thirty years younger than de Comines, but Bayard belongs to the past age and de Comines to the coming age; Bayard all generosity, magnanimity, and loyalty—de Comines full of policy, wariness, and statecraft. And yet de Comines, with his subtle insight into men and nations, is one of the earliest and best of political philosophers, the first great European historian, the forerunner of a long line of

modern biographers and diplomatists. Read the story of Bayard at Brescia, or in the camp of Henry VIII., or as he lay dying in presence of Bourbon, and then turn to de Comines' account of Louis XI. at Peronne, or the story of Louis sending a servant disguised as a herald to Edward IV.—and we shall see how vast was the difference between the age of Chivalry and the age of Statesmanship. And yet the ages overlap, for Bayard died some forty years after Louis XI.

De Comines preceded Machiavelli in date by a generation, and was the first to put into studied form the maxims of policy which were worked out by the statesmen who founded the modern States of Europe —maxims which Machiavelli in the next century systematised with malign cynicism. But de Comines wrote the French—and truer—"Prince"—an earlier, more human, and wiser manual of statecraft, as his own master in craft was a far greater man than any with whom the Florentine cynic had to deal. We who love our Walter Scott, whose genius never was more brilliant than in his *Quentin Durward*, owe it to ourselves and to France to read the Comines' portrait of Louis XI. Notwithstanding his ignoble defects of nature, his cruelty, craft, and superstition, Louis XI. was one of the greatest men of modern ages, the real creator of France as a nation, and the giver of peace, order, and progress to his own people—whilst his moral nature was little worse than those of contemporary rulers and in some respects was even better. He has been the butt of romancers, poets, and democrats. But the lifelong veneration he won from a judge of such penetration as de Comines—a man who shared his inmost counsels and knew his mind to the core—should weigh against the brilliant caricatures of the imaginative painters of the past.

The young people are much mistaken if they

think that we elders and serious readers cannot enjoy fun on occasions. There is Benvenuto Cellini's *Autobiography*, which Horace Walpole truly described as "more amusing than any novel." So it is! This wonderful scamp, this inexhaustible genius, not only produced priceless works of art in many different kinds, but left an immortal record of one of the most burning moments in the history of mankind. He was at once the ever-ready artist in every department of art-work, but also an incomparable romancer in literary gifts. He was a sort of double superman—or multiman—who lived a dozen lives, could fight, and brag, and lie, and draw, and carve, and design, and outwit any man of his time. Since he was born in the lifetime of Columbus and died in the lifetime of Shakespeare, he thus lived in the first seventy years of the abounding sixteenth century.

Benvenuto, in truth, represents the Renascence in its various forms—its art, its rage for humanism, for a new and free world, its romantic audacity, its vices, its crimes, its wild passions and its exuberant vitality. Anyone who reads his autobiography—or rather the extravaganza he so named—will really know the spirit of these *Diavoli Incarnati* almost as well as if he had read through all the seven volumes of J. Addington Symonds' *Renaissance in Italy*. And by all means read Benvenuto's own *Life* in the translation by Symonds, with French etchings, though it is not a book for a drawing-room table. But even in Roscoe's version, or in any of the cheap reprints, it is a perfect pantomime of audacious extravagance. Popes, kings, courtiers and prelates, jostle rogues, bravoes, courtesans and painters in his pages. And he touches Leonardo himself in one side of his career, and Boccaccio on the other—the literary side.

Cellini's unblushing vainglory and confessions

reveal to us that seething and ensanguined flood of Italian romance from which Shakespeare drew no little of his inspiration and even of his plots—a world of reckless enjoyment and thirst for beauty. But the charm of the *Memoirs* lies in this—that we feel it not to be conscious romance or invention of the fancy; for it is told with such precise local colour and such frank realism that we know the writer believed it to be the fact at the time of writing. He had recounted his adventures, escapes, amours, and duels so often and so freely, that he could no longer see clearly what was a true story and what was bombast. There is a touch of Benvenuto about Marlowe himself; and *Faustus* and the *Jew of Malta* in drama recall the fierce and lawless life in which Cellini revelled in actual flesh and blood.

Even Goethe's *Faust* gains colour and an atmosphere if we can bring ourselves to believe in a world in which real men did the actual deeds that Cellini tells us made up his own life and that of his art associates. But, after all, are Cellini's tales more mendacious or more mythical than some other famous autobiographies —Rousseau's for instance, Napoleon's, or even Goethe's? How far is any autobiography literally truthful? Hume's was, and John Stuart Mill's, and so was Gibbon's, and Walter Scott's, but they are all very short and reveal no secrets. Goethe's famous story of his early life is a beautiful and interesting tale, but it always reads to me rather as a romance than as a biography; and it may rank with *Werther*—not with a real account of an objective person. A great poet perhaps cannot indite a veracious record of his own distant years. Could Shakespeare himself have told the truth about Anne Hathaway, or the dark lady, and the true history of the Sonnets? And if Byron's *Diary* had not been burnt but published by Murray,

could we have trusted it; and, in spite of Lady Byron and Lord Lovelace, should we be believing it to-day?

As to Goethe's own life, the famous *Dichtung und Wahrheit* will not take us very far. Then George Lewes' *Life of Goethe* (one of the very best biographies of our age) will certainly tell us what Goethe was, and how he worked. But perhaps the true portrait of Goethe for English readers will always be the various essays of Carlyle, and he wrote altogether something like five or six essays on Goethe—mainly about the prose, not about the poetry, and more on his wisdom than on his genius. The Carlyle *Essay* on Goethe which we selected for the small volume to which I wrote an *Introduction* was that of 1828, now in Carlyle's Library Edition, Vol. VI., p. 233.

There is no more noble biography in all modern literature than the life of the great political reformer of the eighteenth century by one of its foremost philosophers. The career of Turgot—who was sacrificed in his effort to avert the chaos of the Revolution—was admirably written by Condorcet, who was one of its purest victims. A copy of this memorable book is among my cherished possessions, it is that which John Morley used when preparing his own impressive study of Turgot, and which he presented to me. It is an octavo of some 300 pages, professing to be printed in London in 1786, in the heyday of the Versailles monarchy, whilst the storms were gathering in the sky. It is a battered and stained volume, still in its original boards, and to me is always a pathetic symbol of the ruin of a great patriot and the tragic end of a profound philosopher.

The *Life* of Turgot, by Condorcet, has always been to me the model of political wisdom and the rehabilitation of a great Reformer. It may be read along with

the useful biography of Turgot, by W. Walker Stephens (1895), who has translated many documents and letters. The career of Turgot is one of the tragedies of modern civilisation. If his birth and position had been that of a Czar Peter or of a Frederick II., the whole history of France and of Europe might have been different :—

> —Si Pergama dextra
> Defendi possent, etiam hac defensa fuissent.

Turgot's whole life was a lesson in social justice, in moderate and gradual evolution of the tremendous interests which are always present and compounded in any ancient Society. He was too just, too considerate, too many-sided to be popular—perhaps even to be successful—in such an age as that of Maurepas and Calonne. When they dismissed him, men of sense knew that the end was at hand. Condorcet, with his ardent vision of a better age, kept restrained in the recesses of his scientific mind—"the volcano covered with snow," they said—was the very man to see the wisdom, tolerance, and intense public spirit of his illustrious friend. And the little book which he dedicated to his memory, if it be no brilliant portrait of a unique genius, is a manual of political wisdom and a magnificent tribute to the immortal ideas which underlay the social passion of the men of 1789. And when Condorcet chose as motto of his hero the famous lines of Lucan :—

> Secta fuit servare modum, finemque tenere,
> Naturamque sequi, patriaeque impendere vitam ;
> Non sibi, sed toti genitum se credere mundo—

he was giving the watchword in the battle waged by himself as well as Turgot, nay by all the just souls and the clear brains which have made the eighteenth century an epoch in civilisation.

It is curious that of the man who in the whole nineteenth century was the most promising subject for a great biography, whilst we have a dozen *Lives*, Sketches, Memoirs and Studies, we have not got the real *Life*—and we never shall have. We should no doubt furiously enjoy Byron's *Diary*, if it had not been destroyed; but it could never have served as a real biography. And intensely interesting as is Moore's book, neither is that an adequate biography; for it is the apology of a friend, who had but a very poor understanding of the poet's higher nature. In the attempt to dispel the clouds which veil it, we find ourselves confused by a torrent of petty personalities which are continually refuted and revised and never seem to clear up the story or bring it to an end. I shall say nothing here about Byron as a poet, for to me he is not so much a poet as a personality. I agree with those who tell us that it is not easy to find fifty continuous lines of really lofty and finished poetry in all his poems. And yet he is the prime poetic force of the nineteenth century, not so much by his verses, which are usually ragged and sometimes tawdry, but by reason of the inspiration which he gave to his age —by the Titanic power and imagination of the man. To me, it is Byron's prose—not his verse—which is the vehicle of his moral and mental *radium*—that incandescent, scintillating, mysterious centre of activity which for thirty-six years burnt on within a gross and almost ignoble clay. There is not any biography of Byron—there can be none—except in his own *Letters*, *Diaries*, and *Notes*, which to those who can see the man behind them, form a true *Life*. I take up the new and complete edition with its six volumes of prose and seven volumes of *Poetry*, *Letters*, and all the commentaries in the thirteen new volumes, and I say: This is the finest prose in our language; here is the

biggest man who blew the Clarion of the Revolution over England.

By good fortune we have an adequate account of the life of a nobler and better man than Byron—the Walter Scott who carried the banner of feudal chivalry in the van of the romantic revival and reaction from Revolution. My Lockhart's *Memoir* is in ten duodecimo volumes of 1848, with twenty illustrations of the Scott family, Abbotsford, and its country-side. Lockhart's book is not a *Life* (he does not so describe it); it is certainly not a work of art, it is too long, and spun out with too many letters and diaries of other persons. And Lockhart in truth is neither a Joinville nor a Boswell. And, worse than all, Scott himself had no great gift as a writer of letters or journals. Byron was immensely his superior in this, and so, as Scott naïvely told Lockhart, he gave up poetry "because Byron *beat* him." And yet, though neither Lockhart nor Scott had any genius in biography —Scott's own early fragment might be written by any one—and though the letters are often goody-goody commonplace, and the diaries cited are not literature at all, still I find Lockhart's *Memoir* the fascinating record of a glorious genius in a great spirit.

It may be that I am myself *fanatico* about Scott—whom Comte rated as one of the twelve great poets since Homer. I am, indeed, *Scottis ipsis Scottior* in the way of adoring Scott; and I take a childish pleasure in the fact that his last two romances were issued in my own lifetime. I was brought up on the Waverley novels—and even on the poems—and the Waverleys were almost the only novels that I saw as a boy. And now that I have the Waverley edition of the novels in forty-eight volumes, and the companion edition of the poems in twelve volumes, with engravings by Turner, Landseer, Leslie, etc., etc., in each

volume, I never get tired of them. But I am dealing now neither with novels nor poems, but the record of Walter Scott as a man; and in spite of its prolixity, and, too often, its commonplace, I enjoy all that Lockhart has to tell.

Scott himself, I am free to confess, had a strain of commonplace—his silly pride in his border robber ancestors (as the cousin of a Norman Duke told me once, there are no such snobs as the cadets of a titled family)—the absurd craze to found an ancestral domain, and the gimcrack at Abbotsford (I fear it disillusions most of us English when we first see it), Scott preserving the glass from which George IV. drank, etc., etc. Put aside these trivialities, and what a fine nature and unconquerable soul was in that colossal lump of manhood! I know the scenes of the romances well, and the poet's grave at Dryburgh—a worthy rival in its pathos to the graves of Keats or of Wordsworth—and I have read some of the novels in the original M.S., written at the rate of some 2000 words in a morning—what a prodigious mountain of work! what a world of imagination! what a generous, warm, brave nature!

I can enjoy any one of Lockhart's ten volumes—the raptures of Scott's early courtship, the anecdotes of law and lawyers; the commencement of *Waverley*, and the laying of it aside for years; the meeting with Byron, their correspondence and mutual admiration; the visit to Waterloo, to Paris, to London; the banquet with the Prince, and, above all, the last journey and the death and burial. I know nothing finer than the way in which two men of genius, so utterly opposed as were Byron and Scott, recognised each other, and this culminates when Byron dedicates to Scott his *Cain*, and Scott accepts the honour and applauds the poem. Lockhart's entire book, long as it is and at times *langweilig*, brings Scott to us in life.

We may all know Scott now at home. Byron and Shelley may be enigmas, Coleridge and Wordsworth may be self-contained recluses, hermits, prophets; but Scott is our dear familiar friend whom we have known and loved from boyhood. And so, Lockhart, whatever his genius, secured the essence of the biographer's art, to give a living portrait of the man as he was, not a mere record of what he did.

CHAPTER V

TRAGIC DRAMA

A FRIEND, much given to "first nights," who has dipped into some of the books I have been advising him to read, now says: "Won't you tell us something about Plays; do you not want us to read Shakespeare?" Well, of course, I am as much devoted to Shakespeare as Sir Sidney Lee himself, without pretending to any special knowledge of the older dramatists, much less to any research into the life and work of our own mighty poet. But I am not so garrulous as to discourse about Shakespeare, for our most learned students and our ablest critics have now told us everything about Shakespeare which Research and Criticism can discover—perhaps everything which ever will be known or can be judged as sound and true. Years ago, indeed, I was asked if I would write a *Life* of Shakespeare for a famous series, but I thought it would be quite presumptuous in me to undertake such a task. And it has been perfectly well achieved long since.

Of course, I have read my Shakespeare since I was a boy; and my father, who had heard Mrs. Siddons, the Kembles, and Edmund Kean in all the Plays then given on the stage, used to read to us Shakespeare of an evening as he had heard it played. As a young

man, I carried the diamond Pickering edition in daily railway journeys to and from Lincoln's Inn. Now I have A. Treherne's miniature copies in good "Long Primer," hardly more than two inches square (Edinburgh, 1904). I find the "Arden" set (Methuen & Co.) very useful; and for general use I want nothing handier than the twelve volume set small duo. (issued by Constable & Co., N.D.).

All that I have to say about Shakespeare is this: Don't be satisfied with *reading* him, but go to *see* the plays on the stage. It is impossible to judge any great drama by reading it. The whole nature of a Play of the first rank is transfigured when we see it adequately performed. It is only revealed in acting. *Solvitur ambulando*—a great drama unfolds itself to its catastrophe when we see the characters walk the stage before our eyes—*segnius irritant animum demissa per aurem*—no imagination can enable us to conceive the whole force of a really great drama until we *see* it. You might as well try to judge a Symphony of Beethoven by looking at the score. And this is more true of Shakespeare than of any other dramatist, ancient or modern. Shakespeare was a *player* to the tips of his toes; and he must be *seen* and *heard* on the stage to be truly known.

I speak from personal experience. I have known the stage now for nearly seventy years, and I have heard all the great English interpretations of Shakespeare from Charles Kemble, and Macready and Charles Kean down to our day. I have seen Shakespeare's tragedies and comedies given in Berlin, Vienna, Paris, Milan, Florence—by French, Italian, German, and American actors, including Ristori, Salvini, Devrient, Fechter, Mounet-Sully, Booth, and Grasso. I never miss a Shakespeare play, however staged; and I never see one played without learning much about it,

which I never observed in reading the text. The only thing then that I have to say about Shakespeare is this—Don't be satisfied with reading him—go and hear him, as often as you can, and, if possible, as I have heard him, in different languages.

That is the way to understand the universality of Shakespeare's genius—the unique quality in which his mind surpasses that of all other poets, no doubt all other sons of Adam. I remember a philosophic French friend taking me to see Mounet-Sully in *Hamlet* at the Français. When the second act was finished, I said, "That may be fine, but it is not our idea of *Hamlet*." "No!" said my French philosopher—himself an intimate of Mounet-Sully and of Coquelin—"You forget that Hamlet was not an Englishman. There was a French Hamlet, a German, an Italian, a Russian Hamlet, each different in personal and national idiosyncrasy, but all profoundly true to Shakespeare's ideal of the inscrutable spirit of the ill-starred Prince of Denmark." As I walked away that night from the Palais Royal I saw the truth of the remark. *Hamlet* appeals to all nations, expresses the thought, the yearnings, the dilemmas of all, because Shakespeare deals not with national characteristics, but with the universal ideas, struggles and despair common to human nature.

I am quite clear that our William was the greatest *poet* that ever lived, by reason of his incomparable range of power, and his mastery of *every* form of poetic art—dramatic—lyric—tragic—comic; by his profound grasp of psychology; by his exquisite sense of melody; by his wit, his humour, his supreme imagination, and his universal humanity. No other poet, ancient or modern, combined all these gifts in the highest degree. But though he was the greatest of all *poets*, I am not at all convinced that he has left the greatest

of all tragedies, nor the greatest of all comedies. For pure *tragedy* in its highest form, I hold Æschylus to be supreme. For perennial *comedy*, in its deepest humanity, I hold Aristophanes to be supreme. It is true that there is more poetry, more psychologic insight, more mysterious wisdom in *Hamlet*, or in *Lear*, than in all other extant dramas ; but for massive power and organic symmetry, I hold that a more perfect type of tragedy was reached in the *Trilogy* and the *Prometheus*.

So, for comedy, I find in Aristophanes, along with quite equal comic genius, a more Olympian vein of lyricism, a wider range of satire, and a grander sense of social and moral justice than in any of Shakespeare's Comedies. For to crush Cleon was a bigger task than to chaff Falstaff. To correct the opinion of such a subtle people as that of Athens in politics, in art, in poetry, in philosophy, in manners, and in morals, and to do that by a few Comedies occasionally heard in the theatre—by plays which for two thousand years have been the delight of all serious readers of all nations—this was a kind of comedy, which, with all his glorious wit and versatility, Shakespeare never attempted to touch. Nay, Molière, inexpressibly below Shakespeare in poetry, in imagination, in fancy, dealt with the moral, social, and intellectual follies of his age in a systematic and serious spirit, which we do not find even in the most delightful of Shakespeare's Comedies. The greatest of *poets* did not leave us the greatest of all pure *tragedies*, nor the greatest of all mere *comedies*.

I venture on this, though I know I shall be called names—as pedant, crank, Early-Victorian, and the like. But it bears on a point of importance. We have got into a habit of attributing to our poet a sort of divine infallibility, so that every thing which does

not exactly fit the Shakespearean model, must be inferior and wrong. Now, it is clear there is more than one type of tragedy, and of comedy, as of all other imaginative work. In truth, there are not one or two, but several modes of poetry, of which no single one has any *absolute* supremacy. It is also clear that different ages and various races hold diverse forms of poetic beauty and power. Those who awarded Sophocles the prize for his *Œdipus* and his *Antigone* would have found *Macbeth* too tumultuous, and would have been puzzled with *Lear*. They clung to unity of motive, symmetry in unfolding the plot, and a stately measure of heroic verse from prologue to catastrophe, unbroken by interludes, merriment, and subordinate by-play.

It is no question of "right" or "wrong" or of better or worse. It is simply whether the highest range of tragic intensity may not be reached by the Æschylean type of statuesque simplicity and symmetry as well as by Shakespearean complexity and contrast. Even an Aristophanic extravaganza is less of a fantastic medley—and is more of a drama—than *Midsummer Night's Dream* or the *Tempest*; and the Greek reverence for *proportion* would have been sorely tried by *Cymbeline*, the *Winter's Tale*, *Troilus and Cressida*. Now, it is certain that the classical taste held fast by the Attic type in its widest extension and development; and the classic drama of France, Italy, and Germany had a similar ideal. Of course I recognise the marvellous poetry and imagination of all the Shakespeare Plays just mentioned. I am speaking now of their strictly dramatic power for representation on the stage. All I ask is, that our delight in their supreme beauty as poems should not lead us to rule out of comparison the dramas of the older type as obsolete and mechanical. We are all too apt to "scrap" and "crab" the so-called

classical drama—(I try to follow the popular terms of the day), and to invest our great poet with a sort of "verbal inspiration."

It would be childish vainglory to pretend that either as actors, dramatic authors, or dramatic critics, we English are to-day superior to the actors, playwrights and critics of France, Italy, and Germany. Reasonable men who know these countries and are familiar with their stage are fain to admit that we are not their match. Now, for some centuries, the highest drama in France and Italy, and in the main that of Germany, has maintained its classical type, and follows its own native tragedians at least as keenly as we follow Shakespeare. Of course, I hold Shakespeare as a poet and dramatist to be immensely the superior of Corneille, Racine, Voltaire, Metastasio, Alfieri, Schiller, and even Goethe. But whilst these last still hold the Stage in their own countries, at least as well as Shakespeare does with us, I cannot admit that French, Italian, and German play-goers are utterly without true understanding of drama.

Poetry in all its forms, and especially of all other forms dramatic poetry, has various modes; and it would be narrow and insular to throw aside all but one. To ridicule the French classical drama, as Matthew Arnold did, would be as Philistine a mistake as when Voltaire ridiculed Shakespeare. Because I revel in *Hamlet*, *Lear*, or *Romeo and Juliet*, I am not deaf to the heroics of the *Cid*, or the spasms of *Phèdre*. In a case like this personal taste comes in, and I confess to an ingrained belief that the *Trilogy* of Æschylus—by its intense concentration, its symmetry of evolution, the sustained superhuman majesty of its tone—has touched a higher note of pure tragedy than even *Macbeth* or *Othello*. To me *Hamlet* is an inspired and modern Book of *Job*, and *Lear* is a super-

human *Apocalypse*. For strict and true *tragedy* I hold by the *Trilogy*.

I dare say the young people of to-day think all this is the result of pedantry or convention. But I am no "modernist" in art. I hold by Æschylus, Sophocles, and Aristophanes for types of drama, pure and simple, just as I hold by Pheidias rather than Michael Angelo, by the Parthenon rather than St. Peter's, by Giorgione and Raphael rather than by Tintoretto or Veronese, by Milton rather than Browning, by Mozart rather than Wagner. But whilst I love symmetry and proportion even more than brilliancy and audacity, I never fail to honour the originality of those who tear aside all restrictions and traditions. What I contend for is respect for *all* great types of art, and freedom from national, personal or sectional bias. "Art is long"—but inexhaustible. "Life is short" —but infinite.

It is not easy for an English audience to grasp the full meaning of the classical drama, either in its ancient or in its modern form. The Attic drama was a religious festival—and all the greater tragedies were pervaded by a halo of sacred solemnity—by myth, divine revelation, heroic symbolism, which even scholars can hardly realise in all its intensity and fulness. They were always, to a Greek audience, Miracle Plays or Passion Plays—seen with a convincing realism quite as much as in the Middle Ages by a Catholic audience, and presented on a far grander and more artistic stage. When the Greek dramas are given in a modern theatre, not only is the sacred and mythical solemnity entirely absent, but the scenic conditions are reversed. In the greater Greek theatres, some 30,000 spectators in open air and broad daylight surrounded what for the choric parts of the drama was more a religious pageant or an oratorio, than a play.

There was no change of scene, no acts, no intervals, no artificial lighting, and quite simple and occasional machinery. When our public sees a Greek tragedy, nearly all these conditions are changed.

I was deeply impressed by the recent performance of *Œdipus King* at Covent Garden, where an effort was made to avoid some of these anomalies. If the whole of the area of the pit and stalls could have been reserved for the chorus, if it had been marshalled in rhythmic movements, if the crowd had been far less numerous, less vociferous and unruly, if the whole could have been shown in daylight—the effect of the great tragedy would have gained. I cannot share the outcries of many scholars, especially of those who did not see it but trusted to reports in the Press, that this was not what Sophocles meant it to be, nor what Athenians would have accepted. The criticism is quite true in fact, but the answer to it is this: The myth of Œdipus as conceived by Sophocles, and as familiar to his Greek audience, simply embodied a certain religious, ethical, and social Decalogue, from which there was no appeal, and on which there could be no criticism. To an ordinary London audience these Ten Commandments of Hellenic mythology were not only unknown but hardly intelligible. And yet they form the basic and inspiring motive of the whole tragedy, as completely as the Ghost's revelation of his murder forms the motive of *Hamlet*. At Covent Garden the producers of the play, who saw the impossibility of a London audience realising the feelings of an Athenian audience of the fifth century B.C., resorted to the plan of investing the tragedy with a Barbaric or prehistoric atmosphere, the external forms of which we now know better than Sophocles did, whilst the crude superstitions of it make the horror of the catastrophe more tolerable

to us to-day. If you accept this transposition, you will find that nothing more grandly tragic has ever been seen on the modern stage.

To return to the modern Classical stage—say Corneille and Racine as played in Paris. It cannot be judged fairly by reading the book. It must be seen as performed with all the traditions of the Théâtre Français, and with familiarity with the French alexandrine verse as recited by their best actors. To those who are perfectly at home in this most subtle modulation, and year after year have become acclimatised to the foreign stage, the classical tragedies have a character of their own, which ought not to be rudely rejected by British prejudice. So seen, so understood by a trained student of the drama, *Horace*, the *Cid*, *Cinna*, *Polyeucte*, *Andromaque*, *Phèdre*, *Athalie*, have a real tragic power and impressive dignity. No one can imagine by mere reading these long rhetorical orations, with their Grand Monarque airs, and their *petit maître* courtesies, how wonderfully they live on the stage when presented by consummate actors.

I confess that it was long before I could get over our British prejudice against Theseus making love to Dirce like a marquis at Versailles, and Hippolyte sighing for Aricie in languorous cadences, with masculine and feminine rhymes, set orations one hundred lines long, and elaborate dialogues wherein nothing is done. But on the stage in the "House of Molière" one loses all sense of these artificial prosodies and unities. Let us remember that a Greek play, with its Porson's rules and antistrophic echoes, the joy of editors and the curse of schoolboys, was far more artificial in its stringent limits. My Corneille, with Voltaire's *Commentary* (Paris, 12 vols., 8vo, 1797), and my Racine, with various *Commentaries* (Paris, 8 vols., 8vo, 1822), show how elaborately every phrase and

turn of expression, every word that carries on the plot to its *dénouement*, was studied by author and by a most subtle and critical public. I do not read Corneille and Racine now, except to compare them with Greek, Italian, German and modern plays. But the half-dozen best of them played in Paris by their best actors remain grand art.

They who will study the *Lives* of Corneille, Racine, and Voltaire, Corneille's own *Prefaces* and *Examens* of each play, Racine's own *Prefaces*, and the commentaries of Voltaire, La Harpe, Boileau, and so many famous critics, cannot dispute this, that the French classical tragedy was built up by most learned and subtle studies of the principles of tragic art. English opinion usually pronounces all this study to have been idle and mistaken. I am not at all a zealous convert to it myself: but what is far more important and cannot be disputed is, that the French tragedians consciously bent their efforts to stamp on the national mind great heroic ideals, and to glorify the noble names and memorable epochs of human history. Their types of ancient history were often sadly modernised by the crude knowledge of their time; but no one can mistake the fine patriotic and social enthusiasm with which they laboured to make Attic poetry and Plutarch's *Biographies* familiar to their own people. It is this which makes them worshipped in France, nearly as much as we worship Shakespeare. Frenchmen regard them as national prophets of patriotism, morality, and heroism.

Corneille, as we see in his curious *Examens*, had a most profound belief in his own mission as moralist and preacher; and, with Racine, we know it ended in a morbid religious quietism. Do British critics know Racine's Preface to *Phèdre*? He declares "that no tragedy of his paid a higher tribute to Virtue, for

in it small faults meet their punishment, the mere thought of crime is treated with horror; when passion is shown, it is to paint the disorders which it causes; and vice is drawn in colours which make it repulsive. Such is the end," he insists, "of one who labours for the public, as did the great tragic poets of old. Their stage was a school of morals, as much as were any of the philosophers." Englishmen treat all this as Pecksniffian, but to Frenchmen it still speaks words of pride and truth.

When we come in the next century to Voltaire as a dramatist, we find certainly none of the profound pietism of Corneille and Racine, but we do find an even keener purpose to make France familiar with the heroes of antiquity, with the apostles of liberty of thought as well as of liberty as citizens, but also to show Orientals and Chinese as members of the human family. Voltaire was not such a poet as either Corneille or Racine at their best—and their best is but a fraction of their whole—nor was he so wise and generous a critic of manners and follies as Molière—but he exerted his prolific genius in his dramas, as much as in his essays and his satires, to defend honesty of belief, resistance to fanaticism and tyranny, and in all cases to teach a larger and wiser humanity. Voltaire's dramas are now, perhaps even in France, little read and seldom performed. But pregnant apophthegms and eloquent passages to be found in them resound through the literature of France, and even occasionally are cited in Europe.

I suppose nobody, nowadays, ever turns to Metastasio, whose life was a romance, who has been extravagantly esteemed by great critics, and who certainly enjoyed in his own age a European popularity such as never fell to the lot of any other dramatist. But no one who follows the evolution of dramatic art can

neglect the study of this magical *improvisatore*, who, with moderate gifts as a poet, poured forth such a flood of successful plays, to the delight of a wide and highly-cultured society. The secret of his triumphs is that Metastasio was not strictly a dramatist at all, was a rebel to all dramatic conventions, and made himself the interpreter of some of the finest musicians and singers of an age of great music.

His plays are, in fact, the *librettos* of operas; but his pure and exquisite language, his versatility and learning, his marvellous instinct for musical conditions, exactly hit the needs of the time. Mr. J. Addington Symonds has explained his career with perfect truth and judgment. Read *Clemenza di Tito*, which, even without the music of Mozart or of Gluck, may delight those who care for noble ideas put in limpid phrase. The last act is fine tragedy:—

> Vendetta! Ah, Tito! E tu sarai capace
> D'un si basso desio, che rende eguale
> L'offeso all' offensor?

One cannot easily count the plays of Metastasio. Forty of them were set to music by such musicians as Gluck, Mozart, Handel, Porpora, many of them by several different composers. My edition is in fourteen duodecimos, and the last volume contains 170 pages of *Sentenze e Massime*, some of which are noteworthy, and all present honest thoughts in graceful words:—

> inutilemente nacque
> Chi sol vive a se stesso:—

or, again:—

> Odio
> é un ben, che posseduto
> tormenta il possessor.

Many of these plays, as, for instance, *Didone*, *Catone*, *Temistocle*, in spite of their historic extra-

vagances, and their obvious subservience to the needs of composer and singer, may be read for their generous humanity and heroic tone. It is for this that Rousseau called Metastasio "the one poet of the heart," that Voltaire found in him some scenes worthy of Corneille "without his declamation, and of Racine when he is not weak." Of course, since he wrote only for the musical stage, everything he touched must be regarded from the conventions of opera—his heroes are always magnanimous and his heroines always sentimental. But the singular range of his subjects, over Greek and Roman history, mythology, and legend, over Asiatic and even Chinese tradition, gives a curious variety to his inventions, though, alas, we find little variety either in his characters or his plots.

I must put in a word for Alfieri, who is more to me than Metastasio, and whose tragedies I have seen played by great actors, though I must admit that they are better to read than to see. Alfieri, with all his faults and limitations, had a lofty spirit and true ideals, and like Corneille, and even we may say like Æschylus, he stamped upon his tragedies his own dignity and severe aspirations. His Roman pieces, such as *Virginia*, *Ottavia*, *Cleopatra*, *Bruto Primo* and *Bruto Secondo*, are full of himself, for there was much of the *uomo antico* in him. Living just before, and at the crisis of the great Revolutionary upheaval, his mind dwelt entirely on great public crimes, struggles and plots. He almost equalled Marlowe and Webster in his passion for the terrible, the heroic, and the bloody. And, as he was not a great poet and disdained all trace of grace in language, he is too often stony, and dry, if not dull on the stage. He seldom admits more than one woman in his characters; in the two tragedies of *Brutus* there is not a single woman. The catastrophe is almost invariably assassination or suicide—even on

the stage in defiance of all the classical rules, so that the stage direction—*si uccide*—becomes monotonous. Still, gruesome as are his plots, hard as is his method, and harsh his style—he gives the reader a feeling of tragic power.

His great distinction is to have cured Italian literature of mawkish *morbidezza*. There is no touch of tenderness in the man, and hardly a real love-scene, even in the horrible *dénouement* of *Mirra* which threw Byron into an epileptic fit. But Alfieri has one characteristic so important that he should be studied and honoured. Almost for the first time since the great Attic drama, a tragic poet flung himself entirely free both from the vanity of actors and from the prejudices and tastes of his audience. The French stage was always in bonds to the popular actress of the hour and also to the conventional etiquette of sentimental amours. Corneille and Racine were forced to make demigods and emperors simper out their love in the language of a courtier's sonnet. And our own groundlings at the "Globe" would have sensations and slaughters as well as coarse buffoonery. The French stage and the English stage had to satisfy popular actors and popular caprice. Metastasio willingly laid himself out to satisfy the ambition of musicians and singers; and the Spanish stage was in similar bonds to the dominant friars and hidalgos. Superstitious *Autos* and the fantastic Spanish "point of honour" were the inevitable result. But Alfieri, who was noble, haughty, wealthy, and indifferent to popular applause, almost for the first time, put his own soul into his plays.

His *Autobiography* and his *Dedications* and *Arguments* show that he meant to raise the spirit of his countrymen by presenting to them types of tragic grandeur, patriotism, and honour. To this end he discarded

everything in the nature of by-play, complication, love-making, and any sentimental or comic relief, and from the first scene to the last he kept one dominant catastrophe brooding over the stage. Æschylus himself was not more alien to irrelevant tenderness and intricate distraction. Not only did Alfieri revert to the classical type of severe concentration of interest, though he cared nothing for classical conventions, but he insisted on weeding out of his speeches and dialogues anything like ornament of language, any phrase of fancy or wit, any weighty thought or epigrammatic word which could arrest the mind. His speeches are as free from superfluous embellishments as the iambic parts of Sophocles. Every line is a direct vigorous statement of the thought of the speaker, designed to carry conviction and make his purpose clear without wasting a breath on poetic embroidery. This gives an air of reality and power to Alfieri's characters which is quite absent not only in Metastasio, in Racine, and in a far greater degree in our own Tudor and Stuart dramas. I hold this return by Alfieri to the grand dialogue of the Attic stage with its simple logic and directness of purpose to be a great step in advance towards high art. Unfortunately Alfieri failed to see that the Attic stage developed the Chorus, wherein the most soaring lyrics had full range, and so a Greek tragedy was always rich with poetry. And even if Alfieri could have included the chorus in his scheme, he had neither imagination nor fancy to use it to high poetic purpose. But Alfieri's conception of Tragedy was noble and well worth careful study.

I shall say little here about our own Elizabethan and Stuart drama, because I neither study it nor read it, unless for comparison, and I am writing now nothing like any review of literature, but simply what

I habitually read and re-read for my own enjoyment. I have had to read most of these plays for literary purposes, but they seldom give me pleasure. The monstrous extravagances, unnatural savagery, and coarse filth of too many of them weary me; and I do not advise decent men and women to acquire a taste for them. It is an entirely artificial taste.

Of course, I admire as much as any man the red-hot passion and superb music of Marlowe, that Cæsar Borgia of our poets. No man with an ear can be deaf to the triumphal march of Marlowe's "mighty line." His *Hero* and *Leander*, his poetic pieces, are another thing. He was indeed a great poet, or a great poet *manqué*. But his terrific plays—even *Faustus*, the only one I could read often without pain—are as tragedies the splendid failure of an abnormal and precocious genius. Their Gargantuan megalomania, their ferocious egotism, their inhuman brutalities, to my taste, ruin even their pompous rhetoric and semi-delirious imagination.

It is sad that a man of kindred genius, as was Swinburne, deluded by the wonderful rhythm of Marlowe, should have committed the extravagance of placing Marlowe by the side of Shakespeare. Marlowe does not touch the profound thought, the universality of Shakespeare. It is true that in the one or two notes of his favourite blank verse Marlowe is the equal even of Shakespeare at his best—but then he has nothing of the infinite variety, spontaneity, and ease of Shakespeare's moods. Look carefully at Marlowe's famous speeches, read them aloud, and then note how they play upon two, at most three, rhythmical schemes—each superb, it is true, but from repetition apt to become monotonous.

Take the glorious speech in *Faustus*, when Helen reappears, Act iv. scene 3:—

> Was this the face that launched a thousand ships,
> And burnt the topless towers of Ilium ?

Yes ! worthy of Shakespeare, but the whole speech rings on the same note :—

> And wear thy colours on my plumèd crest—
> Clad in the beauty of a thousand stars.

Turn to the Second Part of *Tamburlaine* :—

> Proud fury, and intolerable fit,
> That dares torment the body of my love,
> And scourge the Scourge of the immortal God.

Here we have the resounding tramp, the bombastic arrogance, and the monotonous music of the young giant. It is as difficult to find in Marlowe a line of monosyllables as it is to find in Tennyson's *Morte d'Arthur* a line of polysyllables. In *Tamburlaine*, Part II., scene 4, the verse

> To entertain divine Zenocrate

occurs six times over within twenty-one lines. It is a magnificent heroic, but artificial and monotonous.

Let us not be misled by Marlowe's wonderful gift of words into thinking his melodious fantasias great Plays. Swinburne's laudations betray his own fatal preference for musical language over coherent thought and organic power. Both Swinburne and Marlowe were intoxicated with their own lyrical eloquence. It is always unsafe to trust a poet to judge a poet. Being himself a poet, he is charmed by the poetic quality in which he specially delights and, finding that in rich measure, he overlooks defects. I am ready to say, in all forms of critical judgment, do not give ourselves up to any *expert*. Listen to the expert as to all facts and indications he can suggest, but do not let him be judge and jury himself. Being an expert, he

is a specialist, limited in his knowledge. The higher criticism has to take in all sides of each art—each work of art.

I can read Massinger at a pinch, but I am not fond of him. He wrote some fine passages, and some most effective scenes; and he tried to work out with ingenious steps his plots, which at least are intelligible, however unnatural and strained. *The Maid of Honour*, Camiola, is the least violent and impossible. The savageries and the obscenities of the *Picture* and the *Duke of Milan* spoil what but for its inhuman key-note would be very skilfully-contrived catastrophes. In the *Virgin-Martyr*, Dorothea's head is cut off on the stage, and Theophilus *coram populo* is subjected to prolonged and revolting tortures. The reek of lust and gore scents the *Italianate diablerie* imported from abroad. Massinger's Comedies are less offensive. *A New Way to Pay Old Debts* must have survived some two centuries, for my father saw Edmund Kean in Sir Giles Overreach and said it was terrific, and we are told that it threw Byron into a convulsive fit.

I do not think any but students of literature need plunge largely into our own exotic Renascence drama. We see too clearly how it became the slave of a public which craved for ribaldry and horrors, and cared nothing for modesty and organic form. The sad part of it is that we find in the young dramatists, from Kyd to Massinger, bad specimens of the things we like least in Shakespeare—his careless improvisation, hurried *dénouements*, and coarse jesting. It would be treason to our matchless poet to delude ourselves that he was always at his best, always wrote entirely to please himself, and kept at the high level of his *Othello*, which I hold to be his supreme triumph in pure tragedy.

As to Beaumont and Fletcher, I have taken them

up at times as a study, but hardly as a pleasure—in a queer, old edition of seven volumes, with absurd engravings, and 4076 pages (Jacob Tonson, at Shakespear's Head, MDCCXI.). It is a copy good enough for me. There are plenty of powerful scenes, most ingenious plots, splendid passages—but as plays they are, to me, unpleasing; and I care not for what is said by Lamb or Swinburne, or any other hunter of ghastly situations, wild fancies, and resounding verses. All these they have—I try the *Knight of Malta* and Oriana's heroic chastity, the bloody catastrophes of *Valentinian*, Evadne's ferocities in the *Maid's Tragedy*, and the horrible dilemma in *Thierry* and *Theodoret*. But the improbability, rather impossibility, of the plots, at once unnatural, inhuman, and fantastic, invented only to exhibit rank extravagances, along with the gross talk of women as much as of men—all this wearies me; and to me startling surprises and beautiful lines are no adequate compensation.

I know there are people who profess to love the Elizabethan drama, and wish you to believe they give days and nights to it. I have heard a lady who hardly knew *Hamlet* or the *Tempest* properly, who had never read the *Faery Queen*, and thought *Comus* and *Samson Agonistes* only fit for the schoolroom on a Sunday, send deep sighs through a drawing-room with, "Ah! but Kyd or Webster," or, again, "Try *The Broken Heart*." I have seen it played, and in spite of powerful scenes and fine declamation, I don't like inhuman outrages *coram populo*. This grubbing up the dregs of the Stuart Stage is decadence. It feeds the fashionable fad that the unnatural and the ghastly is "so powerful," and naked lust is "so bold." I do not for a moment deny that there are scenes of keen tension in most of them; but if the plot is an artificial dancing of male and female puppets in order to arrange these sensations,

it disgusts me. Nor do I fail to find brilliant, even magnificent, speeches in them; but it sickens me to have those followed by rank smut.

Like any other reader, I have tried to pick out Shakespeare's part in the *Two Noble Kinsmen*. That scenes and passages in it are worthy of him, no one can doubt. But the play, as a whole, has been over-praised. The *Knight's Tale* in Chaucer is a beautiful romance, and even Dryden's *Palamon and Arcite* has no little of old John's splendid art in telling a tale. But the incoherences of the Play as it stands in Fletcher's works to be seen on the stage, with its jumble of Theseus and Hippolyta, Emily and the Jailor's daughter, is utterly different from the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, with its lovely fairy world. The hard, gross, cruel realism of the Jailor and his mad daughter, a horrid travestie of Ophelia, and the disgusting "cure" of the mad girl, who is handed over by her father to the embraces of a sham "wooer" —all this is enough to spoil any stage-piece, whatever hand in it our great poet ever did have. Critics like Swinburne and other students of style get so intoxicated with sonorous lines and exquisite turns of speech that they seem blind to outrageous incongruities and deaf to vulgar ribaldry.

The worst of all this Walpurgis Night in so much of Elizabethan and Stuart drama is this, that it shows us how often the world that made it and loved it reacted on the sublime genius of Shakespeare. We ought to get free from the superstition that he was always at his best, always faultless, and almost superhuman, not only in intellect, but in soul and in character. There is enough evidence that he was very far from heroic or saintly as a man, and good ground to think him incredibly careless even of his own genius, and a reckless spendthrift of his own

unparalleled powers. I am unable to get rid of the suspicion that he knew better than any man how often he had failed to give his best, how at times he let himself sink down to the level of his fellow playwrights, and even yield to the temptation of raising a gross laugh. The more we judge Shakespeare by the test of his own truest and mightiest, the more shall we be doing him true justice.

The great Spanish drama had its own national development, and a grand school of poetry it was. Comte made a selection of twenty dramas by eleven different poets, a book which was published in Paris in 1854, seven of these being by Calderon. I have the book, but I read them only with the help of translations. Fitzgerald's well-known Six Plays, it must be remembered, are hardly more than paraphrases, and do not include the *Magico Prodigioso*, of which Shelley translated a scene, nor *Vida es Sueno*, both being perhaps the grandest of all Calderon's works. I have found in the British Museum a *proof* copy of Fitzgerald's attempt to paraphrase the latter, which he apparently never published. But D. F. McCarthy has translated both these magnificent poems, as well as six other dramas. The noble poetry and heroic spirit of Calderon can only be entirely felt when we read his own lines in the original. His truly Shakespearean imagination, his tragic intensity, his devotional ardour, are hardly represented in any version, unless by Shelley, for Fitzgerald's six do not touch the lyrical and religious dramas. But as Calderon is not seen on our stage, and I am writing about drama, not about poetry, I say no more here about the great Spanish poets.

For the same reason I say nothing here as to the German or our recent "dramatic poems," such as *Faust*, or *Manfred*, or the so-called Plays of Browning, or of Tennyson, or Swinburne. They are to us

more poems than dramas, and do not come into touch with the great problems of the Classical and the Renascence drama. When Ben Jonson, with all his learning and his energy, attempted to return to the classical model, he missed the conditions of tragedy as much as he mastered those of comedy. *Sejanus* or *Catiline* are interesting to a student of Roman history, but they are more fit to be translated into Greek iambics than to be played on the stage. And when Dryden and Otway sought to imitate Shakespeare, or Racine, or Sophocles, and they tried all in turn, they produced many telling scenes, some noble speeches; they "held the stage" of their day, and even for a century, but they showed themselves to be poets, not dramatists.

It is vain to hope for any return to great drama in England until it is made indifferent to "long runs," and is not dependent on the money in the till from night to night. We may add also, until it is not dependent on pageantry, costumes, and mechanical devices. The best *Hamlet* I ever saw was given without scenery at all. To me personally the absurd modern craze of darkened house, lime-light and magic-lantern tricks dodging the principal player, the nasty smoking and drink "intervals," the impudent boom of modistes' frocks, are quite nauseous. And still more, is the craze for crude realism of what is most brutal, depraved, and decadent in modern life.

All great tragic art in ancient or in modern ages presented heroic, or grand, or pathetic types of public and social catastrophes, and left us to draw our own judgment on profound problems of morals, of duty, of passion. In Greece, in Rome, in the French, Italian, Spanish and German drama—and eminently in all that is great in Shakespeare—the familiar myths and histories of the past were the subject. The French

tragedy, down to Victor Hugo, Alfieri, Goethe, Schiller, followed and even developed Shakespeare's persistent practice to make history familiar and ideal. But to-day the "advanced" school offers Kinema pictures of what can be seen to be most brutal, dirty, or cruel, in the street, the tavern, or the thieves' den. And we are told all this is "so actual," "convincing," "up-to-date." Or else the subject is the squalid past of a "kept woman," or the week-end frolic of the "smart set."

By its necessary conditions Drama depends on the taste and culture of those who choose to frequent the theatre. In England to-day they do not form a public of culture. To satisfy them scenes must be rapid, cheery, realist, or sensational. To them serious tragedy is "rot." The historic, the heroic, the moral, bores them and drives them out. The only *love* they care to see is the *crambe repetita* of adultery and seduction, as imitated from some foreign novel. Drama cannot live in a society so degenerate.

No return to the old Classical drama is possible in our country and in our time. The very conditions of the Attic stage could not be reproduced. We could not endure the pedantic limitations of the French stage; nor would the severe manner of Alfieri, or of Schiller, be bright enough to amuse a generation which wants everything to be short, quick, and new. But if all these belong to the past, and are incapable of return to life, the study of their ideals and methods is the sole basis of regenerated art. If tragedy is ever to live again, it will be when we can distinguish Shakespeare's *poetry* from his true and his grandest *tragedies*, and when we have essentially bathed our spirits in the immortal dramatists of Athens, as they did in the best ages of the drama both in France, in Italy, and in Germany.

CHAPTER VI

GENERAL LITERATURE

In closing these notes upon Books, my last word, as it was my first word, is this: Read again the good old books, and do not cast them aside as stale, for ever looking for the "last thing out," the very name of which, when it has been scampered through, will be forgotten in a week. To a reader of any brain the great books of the world are ever new; at each reading things strike us which we had never noticed, or perhaps had forgotten, or even had misunderstood. I take up again my Plato, my Shakespeare, my Gibbon, my Scott—and I say, How did I miss that, why did I forget that, did I really never read this before?

I began to study "the Decline and Fall" for my degree just sixty years ago, and I have been reading it in various editions, and lastly in the new edition by Bury, constantly since then. I have read it in Rome, when I passed a winter in Italy and took out the entire set. And yet the interminable narrative always seems to me new. One cannot take in much at a sitting. It is like a Kinema show of the Delhi Durbar. And so with Fielding or Scott. I can read these novels, even the later and lesser novels, over and over again with fresh enjoyment, and when I go on a tour, or on a cruise, I lay in a dozen Fieldings or

Scotts in reprints to keep my mind clear and my spirits sweet. A man who cannot read his poets and his histories, essays, and romances again and again is like one who tells us that he loves music, but, as he once listened to Gluck's *Orpheus*, or Mozart's *Don Juan*, or Beethoven's Symphonies years ago, he never wants to hear them again.

A good test to judge great literature is—what can one read again and again and always find fresh? Personal taste may affect the judgment; but for myself I find (to take the moderns alone) that I am never tired of Fielding, of Sterne, of Scott, Jane Austen, Balzac, George Sand, Anatole France. The earlier and greater Thackerays, or Trollopes, or the short and early George Eliots, I can take up any day and anywhere. The long and late Thackerays, Trollopes, George Eliots, rarely tempt me to return to them. Nor does Dickens, nor the Brontës, nor Meredith, nor Zola, nor Tolstoy. Of course, I am an ardent admirer of Dickens—I am a real Pickwickian, as I have said at length, and I hold Dickens's four or five masterpieces to stand in the front rank of modern literature. As critic I say that; but as reader I do not find myself returning to them. Now *Vanity Fair*, or *Esmond*, or Thackeray's smaller caricatures and satires, I can turn to at any time. I find myself more often taking up *Emma*, or *Cranford*, or *Doctor Thorne* than *Clarissa*, or *The Caxtons*, or *Great Expectations*. It is, no doubt, the charm of *style*, of the simple, easy music of phrase which conveys the idea straight to the mind without either discords, conundrums, or redundance. Richardson wastes words; Dickens has no formed style; Bulwer, and George Eliot, and Meredith, wrote themselves into styles of their own, either turgid, or precious, or cryptic — and therefore, with all their imaginative

gifts, they are more or less tiresome for constant perusal. It is Style alone which can secure perennial delight—and in Style simplicity, ease, grace.

Pure, easy, well-bred prose is always welcome, however familiar or old. The greater masters of such a prose I rank thus: Voltaire, in his *Romans*, which I can read time after time; Rousseau, in spite of his morbid sentiment; George Sand—but not Hugo, nor Dumas, nor Flaubert—Swift, Goldsmith, Gray, Lamb, Thackeray. To my taste some of our noblest writers of prose are apt to be boisterous, embroidered, rhapsodical, garrulous, or smart. So that, whatever their splendid form in their highest moments, we cannot take them as types of perfect style: even Bacon, or Dryden, or Gibbon, or Johnson, or De Quincey, or Macaulay, or Ruskin. We enjoy each of them in segments and at times. But for a long spell and in ordinary hours, there is too much drum and trumpet in the orchestra; or the pomp and volume of the music either drown the sense to be conveyed or demand too close an attention to be easily sustained.

In all English prose, no one to my mind can beat Goldsmith. I take the *Vicar of Wakefield* to be the high-water mark of English. It is free from that air of the Beau in full dress of *The Spectator*, and from the sardonic harshness of Swift. My "Works of Oliver Goldsmith" are in four volumes, 8vo, 1854, and I can read any part—even "The Citizen of the World," the Comedies, nay, the Poems. To me dear "Goldie" is the Mozart of English prose—the feckless, inspired ne'er-do-well of eighteenth-century art. He was a poor creature; and so were Sterne, and Lamb, and De Quincey—but they all four live by virtue of their unfailing charm, their ease, grace, and human feeling.

The supreme form of this lovely type is seen in the *Letters* of Cowper—the purest and most beautiful letters in English—I had almost said in all modern literature. How marvellous a thing is the magic of language, that the intimate outpourings of heart to a few obscure parsons and women in a sleepy country-side, written by a morbid scholar some 130 years ago, whilst Britain and Europe were shaken with tremendous events—letters that record nothing but the affectionate thoughts of a pensive invalid, his delight in his books, in cats, and birds, and flowers, and meadows—that this should enthral busy men of the world in an age of change and strife like ours! Read Cowper's letter of 1790 to Mrs. Bodham, when she sent him his mother's portrait, or his letters to John Johnson—his "dearest Johnnie"—full of his exquisite taste in poetry, his loving advice to his young cousin, his peaceful rapture in Nature. There is not a word in these private letters written for any eye but that of gentle women, rural clerics, and students whose very names the world would never have heard but for this—and they remain unequalled as the most perfect letters in our language.

Gray's *Letters*, too, are classics, were it not that they are too redolent of scholarship and have not the poignant tenderness of Cowper's. Edward Fitz-Gerald's also in our own day are excellent reading—another lonely scholar and poet in the Eastern counties—the best letters, I think, of our times. But "Fitz-" is too whimsical, too much up-to-date, too queer to give us anything like the charm of Cowper. Tennyson wrote few letters at all, and none having any mark of his genius have been published. Nor can we see Browning the poet in his prose as yet given to the world. Much in Ruskin's Letters is magnificent, but they differ little from similar outpourings of self in his

books ; and the greater part of *Fors*, of *Præterita*, of *Arrows of the Chase*, and such collected pieces, are really intimate diaries or familiar letters, flung out to the world instead of being reserved for the personal intercourse with a dear friend. Ruskin's public and private careers were all one and the same.

In their own line, Byron's *Letters* have intense life and power, and for the most part are better reading than much of his verse. It is true they have not the taste of Gray, nor the aroma of Cowper, nor the humour of "Fitz-," but they ring with the vitality of a master-mind, they cut folly to the bone, and defy the world of cant and conventions. I never take up Byron's *Letters* and *Diaries* without remembering the amusing paradox of my master in the law—"No poet —but a great man." Shelley's life was too stormy, and his own nature was too eager, sensitive, and wayward, to suffer him to do full justice to his genius in his *Letters* as we know them. He has not the serene lovability of Cowper, nor the measured judgment and culture of Gray, nor the fun and gossip of FitzGerald. I take little enjoyment from Landor's prose. His *Conversations* are overrated — they are often stilted, unnatural, and monotonous. Achilles, Mahomet, and Anne Boleyn, all talk the same Savage-Landorisms. Can any dialogue be more unnatural than that of Menelaus and Helen, or that of Leofric and Godiva ? Landor, no doubt, was a man of genius, with some grand thoughts and noble aspirations in him, but he always seems to me one of those unlucky men of genius who never found the right instrument on which to express their souls. Devoted as I am to Keats's poetry, I find no such charm in his *Letters*. Exquisite poet as he was, he was no scholar, his culture was haphazard, and his breeding was ordinary—in fact, his was in no sense a fine nature, and his letters show him

as he was. I will not read the *Letters to Fanny Brawne*, and I put them aside. There are some touching passages in the later *Letters*, especially in the last to Mrs. Brawne from Naples, 1820, and in others there are the words of a poet, but never in heart, nor in language, nor in judgment do they give us the tenderness of Cowper's *Letters* nor the fire of Byron's.

Memoirs stand in the same order as Letters, for they are seldom written for any immediate publication —and sometimes for no publication at all. No one needs to be encouraged to read Horace Walpole's, or Madame D'Arblay's, or Burnet, or Evelyn, or Pepys. Of all of these, if Madame D'Arblay is the most lively picture of a rather unlovely age, Horace Walpole, to my mind, is our prince of diarists. If he has not the feminine touch of Fanny Burney, nor the impudence of Pepys, he lived in a more stirring world and among much greater men. But our best writers of Memoirs cannot hold their own with the best of France, of whom the first *hors concours* is Saint-Simon, with his vast canvas crowded with living portraits of a memorable age ; nor with the *Memoirs* of Madame de Motteville ; and along with both the *Letters* of Madame de Sévigné, which are practically historical and critical diaries even more than family epistles.

Saint-Simon, whose twenty-two volumes have been boiled down to four in English, must ever remain unequalled in his pictures of historical persons, and a unique product of modern civilisation. Nor, in the art of critical correspondence, of which the personal and literary charm cannot be lost by time, will the *Letters* of Madame de Sévigné ever be displaced or neglected. The painter of such a peculiar world was exactly qualified for the task. A woman of beautiful nature, with a rare gift of subtle observation and unfailing literary charm, for twenty years studied and

described a society of mingled pride, elegance, culture, and vice. And in the midst of this Comus rout of anti-social debauchery, Marie de Rabutin-Chantal remains a sweet, pure, affectionate woman, devoted to her rather ordinary daughter, and passing just judgments on the manners of a brilliant age.

I shall say little about French books here, though for my part I read as much French prose as English; and in critical essays—and what they call *Pensées*—it is agreed that the French hold the field. In their own line we have little that can be ranked with Voltaire's best—with the *Thoughts* of Pascal, of Montaigne, of Vauvenargues, La Rochefoucauld—with the pamphlets of J. P. Courier, the wit of Talleyrand, and the imperial rescripts of Napoleon. In the line of which the finest types are *Manon Lescaut* or *Pierre et Virginie*, *Nouvelle Héloïse* or *La Mare au Diable*, we have little in English to compare; nor again with the short studies on Nature by Jules Michelet, or Victor Hugo's pictures of the sea.

I suppose, too, that in literary criticism we have to give way to the French, who from Voltaire to Renan have set the tone. Nothing in the entire history of literature equals the mass, completeness, learning, and authority of Sainte-Beuve. Those who know the thirty-odd volumes of his *Causeries* and *Portraits*, still to be read only in French, will know nearly all that is worth knowing of French literature. We have nothing in English that can compare with this encyclopædic mass of critical learning and just estimate, even if we call up all that we owe to Johnson, Coleridge, Carlyle, Matthew Arnold, Pater, and Symonds—to say nothing of the famous men happily still with us—for of living writers, in this series of essays, I very humbly and wisely forbear to speak. Coleridge, indeed, was a much greater man than Sainte-Beuve, both as critic

and as writer; but he did not touch one-tenth or twentieth of the ground. And admirable critic and delightful writer as was Matthew Arnold, he is after all, in mere range and knowledge, hardly more than a Sainte-Beuve *le jeune*.

One of the hindrances to pleasant reading nowadays is the doleful superstition "made in Germany" that a serious work is bound to be "exhaustive," drawn from original sources—what the Germans call *gründlich*. That is to say, every scrap of documentary evidence has to be not only seen by the author, but thrust upon the reader. Now, nine-tenths of contemporary documents are just as shallow, untrue, even mendacious, as contemporary gossip. The business of historian or biographer is to weigh the value of all this old paper and to give us his own mature estimate of the real facts. But the fashion is to serve up most of this documentary material in the raw, and leave the reader to draw his own conclusion. In the result the reader finds these "exhaustive" treatises to be exhausting, and he turns from them to something less prolix. He is told that a well-knit, well-digested book, say, in one modest volume, 12mo, is "a sketch," "a study," a thumb-nail portrait, not to be treated as "serious" literature. Such a book as Southey's *Life of Nelson*, Voltaire's *Charles XII.*, Mark Pattison's *Milton*, Froude's *Bunyan*, Goldwin Smith's *Cowper*, tell us what is essential to know of the men. The rest is to be found in their works or in the history of their times. But it is to confuse and weary the ordinary reader if every bit of printed stuff relating to the subject has to be inserted *verbatim*, if the story of the events of the time and descriptions of all the persons brought into touch with the hero have to be dwelt upon at length. In a famous trial, when Whistler the painter was asked in cross-examination if he justi-

fied charging a buyer of his picture a long price for the labour of a few mornings, he replied, "No! I value the work as the labour of a life of study!" A good book must be the result of thorough and conscientious study by the writer; but the less all this preliminary study is thrust upon the reader, the more concise and vivid is the conclusion so laboriously attained by the author—the fewer pages in fact used to convey the impression, the more willingly will the book be read. "Serious" books nowadays are too apt to become weighty, in every sense of the word.

That word of ill-omen known as Research hangs upon literature like the microbe of Sleeping Sickness. No one who knows me will suggest that I disparage thorough and exact knowledge or show any mercy as a critic to superficial work. No man has any right to make public his thoughts upon any subject until he has thoroughly exhausted and assimilated all that can be reasonably learned about it. But he has got to give us his *thoughts*, not his materials; what is *worth knowing*, not what can be stated and printed; what conclusion can be reached by Research, not what Research can unearth and cast up in a rubbish-heap. Books are too often made nowadays by laborious poking into charnel-houses and dustbins of the past, instead of by intelligent understanding of men and things. The first thing and the last thing in a real book is Thought. Tons of Research will not weigh down an ounce of Mind. For this canonisation of dead Facts is the ruin of healthy and pleasant reading. And if reading gives no enduring pleasure it serves no humane purpose.

On this ground I welcome and I use those handy volumes of "Selections" from poetry and prose, and those summary Lives of statesmen and authors, which are coming into general favour. First and foremost

of these we must place Palgrave's *Golden Treasury*, a perfect epitome of lyrical verse, which always seems to me to contain every lyric we really love, and to include nothing that we do not care for. No doubt it owes much to the exquisite taste of Tennyson—a veritable Ithuriel spear. To know that little book is to have taken a degree in the Academy of the Poets. Another such admirable selection is Matthew Arnold's *Wordsworth*, a poet who, as Arnold truly says, singularly gains by judicious elimination of his long-winded meditations. Byron, too, may well be condensed for his fine lyrics, but when we get over our irritation at Byron's ragged and theatrical ways, we have to read through *Childe Harold*, *Manfred*, *Cain*, and *Don Juan* as entire poems, taking the good and evil of them together. And the same is true of Shelley as well as of Keats, for those who love them best have to admit that Shelley, like his skylark, at times sings himself up far out of human ken—loses himself, in fact, in the light of æther; and Keats, who after all hardly lived to come into his own, only did his genius full justice in his exquisite sonnets, odes, and shorter lyrics rather than in the longer pieces, with some of which he was not at all satisfied, born poet as he was.

Of modern poets I find myself most often taking up Coleridge, Shelley, Tennyson, Matthew Arnold—and that in their shorter pieces: the more ambitious and long poems I read, as Saint Jerome saith the Church reads the Books of Apocrypha, "for example of life, and instruction of manners," but I do not so readily go through with them, and I am writing now about my own habits of reading. I see all the beauty of Keats, of Swinburne, Rossetti, and others whom it is the fashion to praise, I think, in needless superlatives; but for my own enjoyment I require sustained and original Thought, and not merely melodious phrase

and luscious images. Thoughts, ideas, appeals to mind or action, are the essence of poetry as of all other kinds of composition. And sweet songs about nothing in particular do not long hold me. Again, they who offer Thoughts without music should write in prose, not in verse.

I turn to the condensed books in prose, and now nearly all the great men and great events may be read in one or other of the recent shorter histories and handy *Lives* of our own and European heroes in many popular series. Foremost I rank Jules Michelet's *Précis de l'Histoire Moderne*, now translated and continued by Mrs. W. Simpson. Then J. R. Green's *Short History of England* was admirable in design, even if its execution hardly equalled its plan. And this excellent book is even greatly increased in value if read in the four-volume illustrated edition of 1892-4. Several of the Lives of Statesmen and of Writers, in various series, in one short volume are all that such biographies should be. It is mischievous pedantry to ask for 1000 pages octavo, with contemporary documents in full *verbatim*. There are at least one hundred Lives of prime importance to civilisation, and at least ten all-important periods and movements. And the general reader needs manageable books on each of them, and he is lost if you send him without guidance to the Bodleian or the British Museum to grope amid their shelves.

Notwithstanding, or rather in consequence of, the enormous mass of material about Napoleon and his times, I think a single adequate *Life* in 300-400 pp., 12mo, is yet to seek. I think the same is needed for Alexander, for Julius Cæsar, for Charlemagne, for Alfred, for Frederick the Great, and for Washington. And we need similar condensed histories of the

Byzantine Empire from the first to the last Constantine; for the Middle Ages; the Renascence; the settlement of Europe; the Revolution, in the style of those excellent Manuals of Victor Duruy. *Mega biblion mega kakon*—the piling up of massive library works wherein the events of one year require 500 pages octavo, may be the glory of literature—but it is the death of Knowledge.

I yield to the fascination of new Travels in unknown lands, and I confess that I never see one on the Club table, where about three fresh ones appear each week, without turning them over at least for the photographs and maps. I suppose this age of rapid locomotion cannot stop to look at one of the real old primitive discoverers, such as Cook, or Bougainville, or Anson, or Ross, and the early Arctic explorers. My Cook's *Voyages*, in five folios with plates and maps, is wonderfully good reading even to-day, and so are Kane's, and Franklin's, and Parry's. Do our young friends ever take up *Eothen*, or *The Crescent and the Cross*—two books which entranced my youth, and which were literature as well as travels—and this can be said of few modern books of travel—or Burton, or Layard, or Huc, or Vambéry, or Livingstone? In these days of globe-trotting and Round the World in seventy days, it is curiously amusing to see what travelling was in the first half of the nineteenth century.

And are old-fashioned books all voted "back numbers" in journalese slang, and does no young person who respects himself ever look at *Transformation*, or the *Scarlet Letter*, or Washington Irving, or *Notre Dame de Paris*, or *Fumée* and *Le Chasseur Russe* —to say nothing of *Vathek*, or the *Amber Witch*, or *Headlong Hall*? And are the ever-fresh Marryats

of our boyhood quite superseded by Joseph Conrad, "scrapped" by the Dreadnought literature of to-day? I suppose that if I admit that I can still enjoy *Peter Simple*, and *Midshipman Easy*, and *Snarley Yow*, my young friends will say that it is my second childhood. Well! all I can say is, that second childhood is a delightful time for the reader of old books. I can take up *Peter Plymley*, and Disraeli's early Satires, *Hadji Baba*, and the *Rejected Addresses*, and have a good chuckle—nay, a wiser chuckle than I was able to feel sixty or seventy years ago—we old ones find more truth underneath the fun.

I care little for Parodies, which are almost all failures—I never could see the charm of *Bon Gaultier*—but there are one or two which, being real criticisms, have enduring value. Apart from *Joseph Andrews*, which, beginning as a parody, soon became an immortal romance, there are two modern Parodies—one in verse and one in prose, which are at once good fun and solid criticism of mannerism and extravagance. The *Rejected Addresses* is the best, because the truest, Parody we have. The "Byron" hits the poet at his weakest side, and even as a poem is finer than the poet's own prize Prologue. And it is much to Byron's credit that he pronounced the verses to be the best of their kind, with lines "which he wished he could have written himself." And Scott, too, much to the honour of his generous heart, enjoyed and praised the consummate parody of his "Marmion" and "Lay." The "Wordsworth" and the "Crabbe" also are perfect, though we fear neither poet quite relished the joke. Half the other pieces merely cease to delight us, because the originals are utterly unknown to-day. But the "Johnson," the "Cobbett," the "Southey," the "Coleridge," and the "T. Moore" have delightful touches, even if overdone in the whole. The prose

Parodies of Thackeray are also consummate bits of sound criticism as well as rich with Homeric laughter; and "Codlingsby" and "Rebecca and Rowena" are quite worthy of "The Rose and the Ring," or the burlesque Ballads. I remember how a famous Oxford Don, seeing on my library table the big illustrated "Works of Thackeray," in twenty-eight volumes, large octavo, wondered how a serious person could commit the extravagance of purchasing such trifles. I suppose there are no books on my shelves which I take down with more pleasure and more often. Why, Thackeray was even with his pencil a consummate caricaturist, a real ballad singer, and a writer of absolutely perfect English in every form in which our tongue can be used—whether gay, or pathetic, or sardonic, or eloquent. One who desires to write pure English has to know his Thackeray from end to end.

A fig for the Dons! But I must end these chats about Books with a serious word or two, and my main point throughout has been this. The idea that wholly new and original forms of literature or art are likely to be discovered in the twentieth century is a juvenile delusion. In the two or three thousand years that have passed since Homer and Virgil, Sappho and Horace, Plato and Cicero, and all that Italian, French, and English literature has since achieved, the possibilities of *form* in which genius can find expression have been exhausted for all practical purposes. Of course, the limitless expansion of human life and the ceaseless control over the World will give perpetually new ideas to be told and inexhaustible stores of fresh knowledge to be spread. But human language does not expand with infinite rapidity, and the *forms* of human expression are not infinitely numerous nor infinitely variable. There is such a thing as Style, both in verse and in prose. And, in the centuries

since The Psalms and the Lyrical and Dramatic Poetry of the Ancients and the Moderns were made, all practicable forms have been tried. It is affectation to imagine that poetry can be made up with discordant sounds, by lumbering lines that drag when we utter them aloud, or by printing prose in set lines of equal length and vowing that this is poetry. It is quite like the "Mad Hatter" paradox, that there is more real beauty in a toad than in a living man or woman.

There are Types, Standards, and Canons of Beauty both in literature and in art; and it is a cry of feebleness and conceit that a new literature and a new art are going to be invented by the sorry trick of defying all that the good sense of mankind has hitherto loved as beautiful and pleasing. All this ends in a new form of Baroque Decadence. A democratic and revolutionary age reeks with obstreperous forms of vulgarism and anarchism. And no form of either is more in evidence than the fashionable attempt to discredit or discard beauty and harmony on the ground that they are signs of weakness or decay. Grace, self-command, proportion are alway strong, however sweet and delightful to the ear, the eye, or the mind. Sophocles, Virgil, Milton, and Shelley are neither weak nor decadent because, whatever their thought, they sought to convey it in exquisite words. Nor will the combined armies of Research in Europe and America ever make Gibbon obsolete; nor will the Railway Bookstalls of the entire world ever overwhelm Fielding and Scott in an avalanche of up-to-date novels. As an old man, I stand by the old Books, the old Classics, the old Style.

CHAPTER VII

THE HOMERIC PROBLEM

THE origin, date, authorship, and history of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* form a problem which lies at the root of literary judgment, and it cannot be ignored in any critical estimate of the World's best thought. It has exercised the mind of the most learned scholars and the acutest critics in ancient and in modern times; and in our own generation it has grown to be one of the keenest controversies which divide educated men into opposite camps. The "Separators," as antiquity nicknamed those who denied that the two great Epics had one and the same author, have now grown into an army of learned "Smashers," who break up the poems into fragments of many different poets, and of ages whole centuries apart.

The problem is extraordinarily complex, for its solution depends not only on poetic judgment but on linguistic scholarship, on archæology, on the history of art, of manners, and even of religion. Its appeals pass to geography, anthropology, and all forms of comparative science. It is a ground on which the poet, the antiquary, the artist, the historian, the palæographist, and the social philosopher face each other in arms like Hector and Achilles. Some Trojan —say a man of letters, steeped in the poetry of the

world—asks us proudly if we can doubt that one and the same immortal genius composed the first line of the *Iliad*—"Sing the wrath of Achilles"—and also the last line—"Thus they buried Hector, the tamer of horses." And then—*ton d'apomeibomenos prosephe*—some eminent scholar tells us that he recognizes a dozen different hands, dialects, and habits, and that the singers of the different "lays" lived in countries widely apart and in ages remote from each other.

A majority of the most learned Hellenists of Germany and of Britain declare that "Homer" cannot be the name of any person at all; that the *Iliad* is a "Patchwork," worked up into the form in which we know it by an anonymous editor in late historic times, three or four centuries later than the spurious person whose name or nickname got attached to the kernel of the Epic. On the other side, I have heard Mr. Gladstone passionately assert that "the whole tendency of modern scholarship was to show that the entire poems were both the sole work of the same poet." Sir Richard Jebb heard this, and kept a discreet silence. And so did I. But very much has been found out and learned since that day (it was twenty-two years ago); and I can keep silence no longer. I am perfectly satisfied that there is much in our *Iliad* which never came from any original Homer; but I am no "Smasher," and I feel in my bones that the poem as a whole is the immortal work of a mighty and sublime genius.

Mr. Andrew Lang is right when he insists that this is a literary problem in the final appeal, rather than one of verbal scholarship, or archæological presumption. That is, for the question whether the *Iliad* in the main is a single creation, we had better take the judgment of Lord Tennyson than that of Professor Wilamowitz-Moellendorff. All which that

illustrious chief of Greek scholars has written and all that is written by those who have worked with him in Germany and in England and America, and indeed in the educated world—all this has to be considered. So has all the evidence collected from palæography, prehistoric excavations, archaic art, ethnography, folk-lore, national sagas and romances, and the like. It is now a mass of curious learning heaped up round the Epics of Greece—but in the last resort the verdict must be delivered by a jury drawn from the lovers of great literature.

It is a commonplace of criticism to call Homer (and by this is usually meant the *Iliad*) the Bible of antiquity. It was certainly the primary text-book of education and the only book that had any kind of religious authority. And now the modern scholars want to convince us that the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* had as many different authors as the Old Testament and were composed in as many different ages.

I shall attempt to deal with the problem as essentially belonging to the world of literature—rather than that of pure scholarship. For thirty years I have been fascinated with the task, and have done my best to master the arguments of scholars, historians, archæologists, and mythologists. I have visited Greece and the islands of its Western and its Eastern Seas three times in my life within the last thirty years, and have read my *Iliad* and pondered on its origin whilst watching the plain of Troy or the wooded hills of Chios, and again I have read the *Odyssey* on a yacht voyage to Ithaca, Zante, Cephallenia, and Corcyra; and text in hand I have tried to identify the Cave of the Nymphs and the "School of Homer," and the Cyclopean walls of the "Castle of Ulysses." I have followed Schliemann's suggestions with curiosity and doubts on Mount Aietos in Ithaca, and again in the

excavations of Tiryns and Mycenae, and other ruins in continental Greece.

I have studied the remains of prehistoric Greek art *in situ*, as well as in the Museums of Athens, Naples, Paris, St. Petersburg, Berlin, Copenhagen, and in England and America. And with some sense of disappointment I have sought to extract the final and positive *conclusions* to be drawn from such erudite libraries as are devoted to archæology and primitive art, as well as from the enigmas and dilemmas presented by an array of scholars and experts who land us in interminable contradictions and insoluble hypotheses. I pretend to no learning of the kind myself. It is merely what those who try to judge literary problems are bound to know. But alas! after all these learned disquisitions, vague conjectures, and inexhaustible quarries of antique stones, potsherds, and bronze fragments—there is almost nothing certain on which the scientific historian can rest—and we must fall back on the best judgment which minds trained in the higher literature can give us.

After wading through learned works on the "inconsistencies," "contradictions," and "blots" in the *Iliad*, on the vagaries of the Aeolic and Ionic dialects, on the Atticisms, the obelized "Spurious" passages, on the "obscenities" and "immoralities" of the grand old bard, on evidence and want of evidence of any known writing in prehistoric times, after studying Cretan "scripts," Cyclopean walls, Mycænean foundations, tombs, gates, halls, the ground plan and cellars of Tiryns, after poring over broken pots, metal, ivories, enamels, the frescoes from Crete, the gold work from the tombs, the battle of commentators "at the ships," or at "the Scæan Gate," the hot blows rained on the great "breast-plate," "zoster," or "shield" in controversy—the tug-of-war between bronze and

iron, bow and spear, poet or rhapsode—after all this hundred years of a new Trojan War—I come back to this—that I do not see we are much further than was Grote in 1845—and in the main I have held by him ever since.

For the ordinary English reader who has no time for German scholarship, the two schools of Unitarians and Separatists for the Epics may be roughly classed as those who follow Gladstone, Symonds, Monro, and A. Lang, and those who hold by the German scholars and Professor G. G. Murray and Walter Leaf. But we must remember that if there are two schools of opinion, the critics differ amongst themselves. No two hold precisely the same view. Every statement is met by blank contradictions, and the appeal to taste is even less convincing than the appeal to learning. "A man," says a German scholar, "who can suppose the same poet to have written the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* cannot have read either throughout." "The man," says Mr. Gladstone, "who takes the *Iliad* to be 'patchwork' has no feeling for great poetry." Even about "scripts," bronze, arms, burial, houses, dress, and food, the learned archæologists contradict each other. Each ingenious guess is constantly discredited by some new "find."

This is not the place, nor am I the man to discuss those points of language and archæology in detail. I do my best to follow them and I will briefly state my own conclusions. The great *crux* started by Wolf in his *Prolegomena* of 1795 opens the modern battle of Homer. He showed that there was no evidence either in the poems or elsewhere that the art of writing existed in prehistoric Greece; and that a poem of some 15,000 lines could not have been composed or preserved without writing. Upon that premiss, which has never been absolutely proved to be false, various

results have been argued—either that the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* (as we know them) were largely the work of historic times, or that they were never composed as single poems, but were "Lays" of various dates by different poets, finally evolved, completed, and edited in an age of formal literature and books to be read and not to be recited.

Desperate efforts have been made by learned and ingenious students, especially since the wonderful excavations in Crete, and in other Asiatic remains, to show that some form of writing was practised in Greece in early ages. The single phrase in the *Iliad* in which it is thought that a message was conveyed by "baneful signs" has been discussed as much as the Rosetta stone or the Capitoline marbles. But all that we hear about the Cretan undecypherable "script," about Dipylon vases, and inscribed decrees, fails to convince us that the Greek language was ever written in Greece proper before the seventh century B.C. Even this preliminary point is uncertain. It is perhaps highly improbable that the Greek language was written much earlier than this—Professor Bury will carry it back in Ionia to the ninth century—but actual proof of its use in Greece proper until near historic times is still to seek.

But does it follow that, in the absence of writing, a poem of the length of the *Iliad* could neither be composed nor transmitted? It does not follow. Knowing what has been done by memory in ages when poems could only be preserved by memory, and looking at the example of other races, we may well conclude that, at any rate, the bulk of the *Iliad* could be composed, and fairly well retained, by professional reciters trained from boyhood to that art. If it be admitted that this is within human powers in a primitive society where every fact and art in life could only be perpetuated in

memory, then both the alleged inconsistencies of the plot become natural and the variations and faults in the text are explained. A poet who had no manuscript in separate "Books" to refer to might easily fail to perceive, or even might be indifferent to, a discrepancy. And reciters, however well trained, would easily vary the familiar phrases or incidents.

The ground is very much cleared if we refuse Wolf's minor premiss that neither Epic could be retained in the memory. The want of symmetry in plot on which some critics fasten becomes inevitable; and as to the contradiction and varieties in the text, the marvel is that they are not more numerous. It is obvious that, in any case, the Epics were primarily used for oral delivery and not for a reading public—for national and religious ceremonies and not for critical coteries. To apply to the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* tests which might be reasonably brought to bear on the *Paradise Lost*, Racine's tragedies, or Wordsworth's *Excursion* would be alike uncritical and misleading. The whole spirit of both Epics cries out against their being submitted to the verbal and textual analysis of those who *read* and criticised poetry in books.

If we can lay the ghost of the terrible Wolf—and we can do this either by believing it possible to rely on memory in lieu of writing for a great Epic organically composed and transmitted in its entirety, or by accepting the possibility of writing being in use a century or two earlier than any yet discovered script—then we are at once free from the intolerable thought that the *Iliad* is an "artificial" creation of late (*i.e.* of historic) times, deliberately thrown into an archaic form. Into this sorry paradox some illustrious scholars have been driven by the dilemmas of dialect; by trivial points of habit, as that of using

fish for food ; by the absence of given forms of arms, houses, burial, and so forth ; and, worst of all, by some certainly gross bits of *facetiae*, which we are told savour rather of Attic comedy, nay even of a Paris farce. Let us hold no terms with the idea that the *Iliad* can be compared with the *Argonautica* of Apollonius Rhodius in the third century.

For my part, I cannot shake off the faith that the bulk of the *Iliad* was composed in the ages of transition and settlement (to be precise), a century or two before the first Olympiad 776 B.C. ; and I prefer the tenth to the ninth century B.C. That is to say, the *Iliad* belongs to the interval of migration, conquest, fusion, and expansion between the Mycenæan age (anterior to 1000 B.C.) and the beginning of historic Hellas (about 700 B.C.). The Epic, as nearly all Epics have done, paints the traditions and welds the Lays of an age many generations earlier than its own time, and yet is itself many generations earlier than any time when real events and actual persons could be recorded in any written form. The poet described not what he saw and knew around himself, but what he imagined to have been in a former age from the traditions and Lays that it had left. There was no conscious archaism in this. He lived in thought in an older and grander world.

This idea that the poet of the *Iliad* lived and sang in an age midway between the heroic or mythical world of his imagination and the historic and democratic world of which we have certain record, must be taken subject to two very important conditions :—

(1) Our Homer (whoever he was) was saturated with, and he incorporated in his Epic, old but detached Lays about a traditional Trojan war—and therein, no doubt, a primal Lay of the "Wrath of Achilles" and possibly other Lays of the kind.

(2) The *Iliad* of our Homer was transmitted and recited for many generations in various fluctuating forms, received minor additions and corrections in points of dialect and of detail, and was finally reduced to the "received version" in Athens in the sixth century.

But yet, neither the early Lays incorporated, nor the later literary recension and editing, were of sufficient bulk or importance to affect the essential unity of the *Iliad* as we know it, nor did they diminish the authentic originality of the real poet. Away with talk about "a first Homer," a second Homer, and even a third Homer! There was, and is, but one Homer (whatever his real name and origin). He is *our* Homer, the true Homer. The *Iliad—our Iliad* —is the real Epic. There are no more several Homers than there are several Miltons. Nor are there first, second, and third *Paradise Losts*. The poet of the *Iliad* used current myths and early Lays just as Milton used Genesis and the Bible as a whole. But to tell us that Homer No. 1 composed the "Wrath of Achilles," and Book A or Book x., is like telling us that Moses wrote Books v. and vi. of the *Paradise Lost*. The *Iliad*, as a whole and in the mass (granted some additions, interpolations, and modern editing), is a single poem—the grandest Epic in the whole range of human genius.

We may give full value to the subtle and ingenious points raised mainly by German scholars and collected in the learned treatises of Professor Murray and Mr. Walter Leaf as to the discrepancies of dialects, the signs of early and late forms, arms, ornaments, habits of life, moral standards, and details of the kind. To me, none of these are sufficiently important or sufficiently certain to weigh against the judgment of literary culture. I find no agreement amongst

grammarians as to the Aolic and Ionic problems, no agreement among historians as to the dates and conditions of the tribal migrations, conquests, and settlements. The archæologists are not agreed as to scripts, patterns, implements, art, or buildings of the various ages. The fact that certain types have been found in what we call the ruins of Mycenae is not wide enough to typify the industry of an age. That what looks like the remains of burial here, of cremation there, is slender evidence of an exclusive practice either of burying or of burning.

The whole of the archæological argument about the age either of the Homeric poems or of the society they profess to describe seems to me too thin, too local, and too partial to found on it any theory of the historic conditions of a whole age, which may reach in space from Corcyra to Smyrna and Crete, and may reach in time from the age of Cadmus to that of Solon—traditionally counted as about 700 years. Not only are these fascinating and suggestive finds of the Diggers too scanty and too dispersed to be by themselves historic evidence, but they yield as yet little but mere hypotheses which interpreters, from Schliemann downwards, explain in contradictory ways. The entire material archæology applied to problems of language, race, epoch, art, or civilisation, is a quicksand of conjecture, controversy, and chaos. Till Archæology can give us oracles less free from double senses, such as the priests can agree to interpret in the same meaning, we must do the best we can to interpret the *Iliad* by the same canons we apply to the initial poems of other races.

There seems to me to be a very useful rule which was stated and worked out thoroughly by Grote in 1845. In his famous Chapter xxi. of his *History of Greece* (vol. ii.), he tells us to take the construction

of the *Odyssey* before that of the *Iliad*; and to note the sequence and systematic plot of the "Return of Odysseus" instead of breaking up into detached Lays the battles round Troy in the *Iliad*. When we do this, we see, as Grote shows, that the *Odyssey* is "pervaded almost from beginning to end by marks of designed adaptation"; and the instances of flaws and fissures in the organic unity of the poem are too small, too trivial, too easily explained to found any evidence of separate composition by different poets in various ages.

Even Wolf and other critics of the unity of the *Iliad* are quite alive to the more organic character of the *Odyssey*. Grote himself and others after him have shown a thoroughly artistic scheme pervading the poem as the wanderings and adventures of the single hero who gives his name to the Epic. The construction of the *Odyssey* is singularly concentrated round the person of the dominant chief. The most determined "Smasher" recoils before him like the suitor Antinous before the clang of the mighty bow whose string no other mortal can draw. From first to last we have Odysseus as the hero of the poem—especially if with Aristarchus we allow the original poem to end in the nuptial chamber—so that the Epic begins Book i. 1. "Sing me, Muse, the Man of genius versatile" down to Book xxiii. 296, when we leave Odysseus and Penelope "happy again in their bridal bed." The whole Epic is a marvel of constructive symmetry.

This does not mean that the *Odyssey* has not been tampered with, revised, and expanded at various times, and the concluding lines of Book xxiii. and Book xxiv. have been justly suspected even in antiquity. I confess the idea of the Virgin Goddess Athene watching over the due measure of her favourite Hero's marital bliss is a little comic, and might

almost justify the prudery of Professor Murray. But apart from corrupt passages, "sinking the offal," as butchers say, interpolations excepted, the *Odyssey* is a single great Epic and not "a patchwork" of Lays. Attempts to make it much later than the *Iliad* have failed, *i.e.* to ascribe it to a new era and a different epoch of culture. If so, we have a great symmetrical Epic as long as the *Iliad*, not widely separated from it in time, which was obviously composed by a single poet and maintained for at least two centuries earlier than those of indubitable written records.

The Wolfian bugbear of no possible writing fails to destroy the unity of the *Odyssey*, and if so, why need it affect the *Iliad*? The *Iliad* does not profess to have the same unity, and does not bear the name of any hero, or even of anything Greek. It is the "Song about Ilium." It opens with the Wrath of Achilles—but it ends with the Burial of Hector. Still there is an adequate unity about the whole poem to dispel the idea of its being put together piecemeal by different bards. Every one agrees that Book i. of the *Iliad* and Books xxiii. and xxiv. are quite the grandest of the whole poem, and that almost all the intervening Books either follow naturally from the original Quarrel in the Proem, or lead up to the final closing of the terrible vengeance of Achilles. Mr. Symonds in two brilliant essays (*Greek Poets*, second series, Chapters ii. and iii.) has quite convinced me of the essential unity of the *Iliad* as an organic Epic with a central motive.

I do not pretend to judge the difficult questions if all the Books of the *Iliad* as we know it are parts of the original poem and were composed by the author of Book i. I can think it possible that some of them, and parts of them, may have been added, or interpolated after the Proem was composed. If so,

by the original poet, or by another hand? I offer no opinion on that mysterious point. Most scholars tell us it was another hand. From the purely literary point of view, to my mind, there is very little solid ground to support the scholars. Looking at the tone of the Epic and its metrical form, I can quite believe that some second or third poet might be capable of adding episodes in a form which neither ancients nor moderns could reject as inferior and spurious. But I will not believe that any Episodes or Books were added at an epoch distinctly later in time, or in any distant place or race. The bulk of the *Iliad* is one conception —of one age.

I pass to the very interesting problem, if the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* were the works of the same poet. To those who cannot find any certain evidence that either Epic was composed in an age when Greek could be written, and I have shown that it is my own view, it becomes an almost insoluble mystery how any single mind could have elaborated two stupendous Epics of such infinite variety and vast mass. It borders on the miraculous to us who for five centuries have relied on print in lieu of memory to attribute such a feat to a single mind. But to ask us to extend the miracle to a second inspiration seems to overstep the powers of man. Even to put aside the problem of writing, it seems to me in the highest degree improbable that such a miracle ever happened. There is thus an antecedent improbability that the same mind conceived and composed both *Iliad* and *Odyssey* as we know them.

This is usually met by the antecedent improbability of there existing in any one race and age more than one poet of such transcendent genius. For my part, I can see no impossibility in the matter. Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides flourished nearly together in

the same petty city. Pheidias, Myron, and Polycleitus came from the same school. Sappho, Alcman, and Pindar were not so far apart. So far from any single age producing but one supreme poet, the testimony of history is rather that poets come in groups, rather than in absolute singleness. The antecedent probability to my own mind is that an age favourable to poetic genius may develope its supreme power in more than a single brain. Though I cannot see the hand of more than a single poet either in the *Iliad* or in the *Odyssey*, I can easily conceive there may have been two poets each capable of producing their own Epic.

Both linguistic and archæological difficulties are far less numerous and important in the *Odyssey* than in the *Iliad*, and from the literary point of view the cohesion and unity are far greater. But to me the tone and *ethos* of the *Odyssey* is quite different. It is essentially social, affective, peaceable, and even domestic. Wives, sons, homes, servants, dogs, play a part that is unknown to the *Iliad*. In the whole *Iliad* there is nothing like Penelope's love, the innocent charm of Nausicaa, the cottage of the swineherd, the death of the dog Argus. There are no battles in the *Odyssey*—but there are romantic myths and a perpetual intervention of divine and semi-divine beings. There is a difference of standard, of sentiment, and of ideal between *Iliad* and *Odyssey* akin, I may say, to the different tone between *Paradise Lost* and the *Faëry Queen*. Can we conceive Achilles being left at the end of the *Iliad* in the arms of a long-lost bride (Briseis restored), as Odysseus is left in the *Odyssey*, with Pallas Athene contemplating their joys with maidenly pride?

To my thinking there is also another dominant difference which I have never seen noticed. The

scene of the *Iliad* passes in Asia: continental Greece and the Peloponnese are mentioned, and the islands of the Ægean. But we hear almost nothing of Western Greece and its islands, much less of Sicily or Corcyra. Now, the whole scene of the *Odyssey* passes in the Western Islands and the Ionian Sea, and deals with the Southern and Western Mediterranean, and dwells with peculiar and local sympathy on Ithaca and its neighbouring islands, and especially on Corcyra. I once spent a week in Ithaca with my *Odyssey* in hand, trying to localise each scene, and I could not shake off the impression that the poem had been composed by a native of that island. The geographical position and the mountains, bays, and natural features of Ithaca seem singularly favourable to the rise of a dominant Lord of the Isles with a stronghold on Mount Aietos, where are certainly extensive prehistoric remains.

It has always seemed to me that the *Odyssey* has a local origin wholly different from that of the *Iliad*, belongs to a different moral tone, and represents the ideal of a much more domesticated and romantic spirit than that of him who conceived the ruin and slaughter caused by the Wrath of Achilles. I could as easily imagine the author of *Tamburlaine* narrating the Fairy Tale of the Red Cross Knight. But if the poet of the *Odyssey* be a different person from the poet of the *Iliad*, there is no reason to believe them to be widely separate in time, or belonging to a later epoch of general civilisation. The *Odyssey* may be perhaps, by a generation or two, later than the *Iliad*, and may spring from a slightly different state of living and from a rather more humane scheme of mythology. But I can find no serious change of moral opinion or ethical ideal sufficient to prove a later age, or one which might not be due to the different spirit of two

poets—neither quite of the same time nor of the same tribe.

Why need we assume that the poets of the *Iliad* or of the *Odyssey* literally described the manners and the institutions of their own times? There was no conscious attempt to present an archaic society as might be done in our day by historic learning. All great poets live in a world of their own imagination—just as Dante conceived Virgil and Milton conceived Adam. The *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* paint a bygone time of traditional heroes, adopting the familiar life of their actual experience in a perfectly free and natural way. Mr. Andrew Lang in his *Homer and his Age*, 1906, has well explained the process by comparing the *Chansons de Geste*, the *Nibelunglied*, and the Arthurian Legend as arranged by Sir Thomas Malory. These are full of anachronisms and improbabilities. The great difference is that they never found a very great poet, and were not put into an organic Epic in an age of great poets.

We cannot neglect all the learned and most ingenious suggestions of Professor Murray in his *Greek Epic*, 1907. All that we are told by one of our greatest modern scholars and one of the foremost thinkers of our time has to be duly weighed. But, to my mind, these highly ingenious possibilities remain suggestions, hypotheses, grounds for further research, but not historic evidence. The "finds" in unknown and undated ruins are too few and too local to prove the epoch of civilisation. Suppose any European city to be overwhelmed, and a palace or building of it excavated by New Zealand archæologists in the year 2912 A.D., would the "find" of Egyptian scarabs, Chinese porcelain, Greek statues prove much? Is it certain that the Minoan people spoke Greek—or even that the people of the first city of Troy had

any connection with Greeks in language or race? All these problems of prehistoric language, race, and date are still unsolved—are perhaps insoluble.

But when it comes to dissecting the *Iliad* into genuine and spurious, old and recent, barbarous and civilised sections, I for one cannot follow it. Still less do I see the marks of "expurgation" by a more refined poet who was scandalised by old Homer's coarseness of mind, nor the "vices" of the poem as poem, nor the "ready-made" similes and "insincerity" due to the use of conventional phrases in the wrong way and with misunderstanding of their original meaning. Mr. Murray explains these "flaws" in the *Iliad* as the inevitable result of a long traditional story being "worked up" by whole generations of successive poets working through four or five successive centuries. I will have none of it. Not all my profound respect for Mr. Murray's immense learning and brilliant gifts as historian, philosopher, and poet will help me to go with him here. Spurious passages, corrupt lines, later insertions there are, here and there, in the *Iliad*, we all recognise. But before I can believe that the Epic was concocted by an unknown series of poets, I would rather believe that the *Faëry Queen* was a hotch-pot, founded on the Saxon Chronicle, and "worked over" age after age by Layamon, Langland, Lydgate, Chaucer, Malory, and Wiat.

I take it to be wholly misleading to moralise over the Homeric Epics and to attempt to apportion ethical standards to different ages of Hellenic culture. It involves the double error of breaking the poems into successive epochs, and that of stamping the morality of an age by a passage of purely arbitrary date. It looks like the Bowdlerising of Homer to pick out incidents which the Peisistratean editor felt to be indecorous but could not omit, and then to ascribe

a facetious scene to mere modern ribaldry. This involves the absurd dilemma, that when we come upon some horrible act of savagery, we are to call it a bit of antique brutality which "survived" and was too familiar to be dropped. And when we come to an amorous scene which is almost comedy, we are to regard it as the modern interpolation of a scandalous age. The brutality, they pretend, betrays the rude age of the first Homer: the indecency is just the licence of the tenth Homer!

I can see no need for all this censorship of old Homer. I am not shocked by the occasional horrors nor by his rare outbursts into erotic Idyll. All early poetry and mythology reeks with savage incidents as well as scandalous amours—even the Bible, the Sagas, the *Nibelungenlied*, the *Chansons*, the *Fabliaux*, the *Morte d'Arthur*. The whole history and the literature, the whole religion and morality of Hellas, from Cadmus to Longus and even to Zonaras, is studded with things to us unnatural, cruel, gross, and sensual. Plato's ideas of Love and Marriage are revolting to us, and Alexander, the Achilles of historic Greece, was as cruel and as selfish as his heroic type. And I confess I do not find Ξ less Homeric than Λ or Ω, nor do I think that Athenians of the time of Cleon saw anything obsolete, archaic, or barbarous in the slaughter of prisoners of war. The Greeks of all ages were capable of strange brutalities and curious indecencies. The religion, the moral standard of Homer, was certainly not that of Æschylus, nor that of Plato. But I will not count as spurious, or survivals, or interpolations, passages which we may suppose Plato or Æschylus would not tolerate. After all, Æschylus and Plato in certain aspects were anything but typical Athenians. Homer was certainly more the real Greek type than Æschylus. If we take all the remains of

early Lyric poetry of the Ægean lands, I can see nothing in Homer which we might not expect to have glorified and magnified by the voice of a supreme genius as much greater than Sappho as she was greater than Anacreon.

There are two points arising from my own study of the sites of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*—which I give for what they may be worth, without pretending that they come from local examination of a serious kind. As to the site of Troy, it is clear from Schliemann's and all later excavations that Hissarlik was a spot on which a long series of towns had been erected, destroyed, rebuilt, and enlarged from the very earliest age down to late Roman times. This covers some thousands of years. We know of no other town of which the successive buildings, destructions, and rebuildings were so numerous. Why has this by no means conspicuous or defensible spot been defended, assaulted, restored so often? I have passed that promontory up and down from the Ægean to the Bosporus more than once, and it has each time been borne in on me that it is the headland of Asia Minor which commands the entrance and the exit of the Hellespont, the Sea of Marmora, the Bosporus, and the Euxine.

No colony or trader could from the South or West reach any part of the vast coast ranging from Phrygia to the Chersonese, unless with the privilege of the power which was based on the stronghold of Ilium. It was the Gibraltar which commanded access and egress to two important Mediterranean seas, the Propontis and the Euxine. Imagine the Greeks of the Continent and the Ægean Islands determined to force their colonies and their trade into these northern regions, and met by Asiatic tribes, and a long war to destroy Ilium is inevitable.

Again, I cannot believe that either *Iliad* or *Odyssey*

were contemporary with the remains we see to-day at Tiryns, Mycenae, or Ithaca. Nor could I ever tread the soil of Ithaca without the impression that the *Odyssey* was conceived on that island by one familiar with the Ionian Islands and with the Western—but not the Eastern side of the Greek world. Could the author of the *Iliad* show so little local interest in the Ionian Islands, and could the author of the *Odyssey* be silent about the glories of the Ægean Islands, if both Epics were composed by one man?

As Homeric research is so often a mass of fascinating guesses, I will add my small pebble to the cairn by a few guesses of my own. The continent of Greece had been for generations swept by successive migratory tribes of warlike men coming down from the north, and gradually pushing their way into new settlements and also amalgamating with the aborigines. The tribes had traditions, a mythology, and Lays embodying both. They kept moving on downwards and eastwards, forming strong kinglets in Thessaly, then in Bœotia, then in Peloponnesus, and next swarming across the Eastern and Western seas and settling in the islands. At length (some time, say, before 1000 B.C.) the European Greeks found themselves confronted with Asiatic races along the Ægean coast, and a series of contests culminated in a grand struggle for possession of the tongue of land which was the key of the Northern seas and the shores of Asia Minor. The Greeks from Europe got the upper hand and gradually won settlements all along the Asiatic coast, bringing with them their mythology, their traditions, and their songs. A century or two of amalgamation and resettlement passes, and then, some time about 900 B.C., a glorious poet arose in a softer and richer country than continental Greece, and in a people less disturbed by incessant migrations and conquests. He composed the

Iliad, or the story of the great battle of past times, incorporating and fancifully transforming old Lays, many of which had been chanted in old Greece for ages. He taught a body of singers to rehearse different Lays and episodes from place to place. There being no regular books and no authorised divisions, the poems were often recited in somewhat different forms; incidents were added, some fell out, and the language became somewhat irregular.

Still the substance of the great Epic remained, though for some centuries in various forms, even when committed to writing. At length, in the sixth century B.C., when Athens began to be recognised as the literary centre of Greece, an authorised *Iliad*, which is ours, was finally given to the world.

The diffusion throughout the Greek-speaking world of the original *Iliad* would give a great impulse to poetic inspiration. And as Western Greece and the Ionian Sea and its islands came to fill its imagination with the story of Achilles—a generation or two after the *Iliad* another great poet arose in Ithaca to sing the marvellous adventures of his native chief Odysseus, in a poetic key more akin to a people of a quiet rural life and enriched with mysterious tales of its seamen who had sailed from one end of the Western Mediterranean to the other. This is the story of the *Odyssey*, later in date, better preserved, and with fewer barbaric remnants.

CHAPTER VIII

A LECTURE ON HOMER

In our *New Calendar* the month of Homer, with the poets, artists, and dramatists of antiquity, follows on the month of Moses, with the founders of antique Theocracies down to Bouddha, Confucius, and Mahomet. Nothing can show more decisively the human and relative nature of our Faith than this passing from absolute systems of Theology to the men whose genius has given beauty to human life. A true reverence for the higher instincts of human nature implies an equal honour of all essential forms of human sympathy and oneness. Religion, if it is to bind together the various elements of man's being, and if it is also to bind together in one blood all races of mankind, must be able to co-ordinate all the gifts of our complex nature. Hence it must be a task of any complete religion to sanction the part of Poetry in a complete human life.

Art, poetry, wit, joy, in their highest ideal types, are quite as essential to the fullness of Humanity as are any primitive Theologies. Homer is at least the equal of Moses in influence on mankind as a whole. The idea that the Psalms are all sacred poetry, but the parting of Hector and Andromache is profane poetry, is worthy of a Trappist monk. Poetry is everywhere older than Prose, and is far more associated

with early religion. In every known society the earliest poets were the teachers, prophets, and moralists of their age, forming their religion, their manners, their ideals of a great life. And this is pre-eminently true of Homer—of the poems which became to all antiquity their Scriptures, the sole bond of national life, the text-book of moralists, philosophers, and artists. To imbibe the spirit of Homer is to reach the primary sources of the thoughts and the sympathies of the old antique world far better than to have studied the history of events, for the poems stamp in memorable words the ideals of the age.

Every year seems to increase our interest in these immortal Epics which are equally fascinating to the child as to the statesman, to the scholar as to the poet. Mr. Gladstone finds in Homer's goddess a type of the Virgin Mary, and an ingenious author of paradox is certain that the *Odyssey* was written by Nausicaa of Corcyra to solace her solitary life after her unrequited attachment to the hero. After all the discordant guesses of scholars and historians as to the origin, composition, and preservation of the two Epics we name "Homer," we come back to this—that the substance of the *Iliad* from the quarrel of Achilles to the burial of Hector makes an artistic and majestic *Epos*; and that it is the work of a sublime poet. And so the *Odyssey* is a still more organic whole, and the work of a glorious poet, even if not the same.

Of all the names in history hardly any one, unless it be Cæsar or St. Paul, has exerted over the whole human race for 2500 years a social influence so vast as Homer. If the world has had possibly two other poets of equal genius, none have exerted such a permanent sway over the imagination of mankind. The *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* will be fresh and living

poetry when the Pentateuch will have an historic interest like the Code of Menu. The *Koran* may one day rank with the laws of Numa or Zoroaster, and the Psalms of David may become curiosities of literature. But men will still thrill with the immortal tale of Achilles and Priam a suppliant in his tent, and with the burial of Hector, and the sweet lyric of Nausicaa on the sea-shore playing with her maidens, and the return of Odysseus to wife, home, friends, and dog. The Codes of Moses, Confucius, and Mahomet have served their end, or are passing away as living forces. Homer, after near 3000 years, is fresh, native, unstained by time, not affected by novelty or age.

The Poets alone are immortal. All other men, however great, pass away into a dead past; their names become ancient history; their work is superseded, corrected, undone, and recast. The great poems of the world know no change with age; they lose nothing of their original life. Moses is now venerated by the remnant of scattered tribes. Alexander, Cæsar, Charles laid the foundations of empires of which nothing remains in direct descent. Pheidias and Apelles have left but broken stones and traditions. But Homer, Dante, Shakespeare delight us now as much as they did their contemporaries—and indeed delight us far more. And of the three, if Homer be not the greatest, he is the oldest, the best known, the one who has most widely influenced the whole human race.

It is a fortunate circumstance that the sociologic, or the poetic, or merely human value of Homer is not much entangled with the puzzles which occupy scholars and historians as to the origin, date, and personality of the author or authors of these Epics. The niceties of language are perceived only by professed students of Greek; the inconsistencies of the

plot hardly appear to those who read the verses for their poetic beauty, even if they read them in the original. For our immediate purpose we need not occupy ourselves with these fascinating problems. It is a profound remark of our Philosopher that the social and moral influence of Homer in the ancient world was greater, not only than that exerted by any other poet, but greater, we may say, than that which ever can be exerted again by any poet in the ages to come. The like conditions can never arise again. A poet of transcendent genius, saturated with every moral and artistic faculty of a most wonderful race, in one grand poem transfigured for them their religion, their morality, their code of duty, their standard of grace, their patriotism, and all manifestations of their abounding vitality. They had no other teaching, no writings, no education, no organised priesthood, no other intellectual or artistic guides but the poet. All the other arts of form and of sound were in their rudest infancy. The chants of the bard alone filled the imagination of the most poetic race in all human history and satisfied the æsthetic aspirations of a people dedicated from their origin—nay sacrificed—to high Art.

The supreme poet appeared: and he filled up all their longings at once. He systematised their theology in a spirit of sensuous abandonment to freedom and to joy. He gave them ideals of a manly and spacious life. He glorified their memories of the past, and foretold a Utopian dream of national glory and expansion which was not fully made real until Alexander appeared as a new Achilles some six centuries later in time. During all these ages Homer filled the imagination of these scattered and anarchic tribes of the Greek name with unfading types of heroism, loyalty, audacity and ingenuity, hospitality

courtesy, and noble simplicity of existence—but withal, with tragic pictures of man's destiny, the unseen powers of the gods, cruel sufferings for crime, agonies of blighted love, marred friendship, ruined ambition, hope, and pride. Homer became the Scriptures, the literature, the school, the art of a race having superhuman sensitiveness to emotions and widely scattered over the central area of the cultivated world. And all this happened—and it is a point of supreme moment—at the critical epoch in the evolution of Humanity.

The hackneyed phrase that Homer was the Bible of Greece falls far short of the whole truth. Homer was to the Greeks for some ten centuries, and to the Greco-Roman world for five centuries also, much more than what the Bible has ever been to Christian people except to Puritans in Britain and some Northern races for about one hundred years after its diffusion in the vernacular. To the contemporaries of Luther, Calvin, and Zwingli, to Cromwell, and to Fox and Knox, the Bible was their literature, their standard of duty, and their code of life. No doubt the Koran has exercised absolute sway over the lives of large populations; and so have the traditions of Confucius. But no poet has ever approached Homer in similar authority over the education and the tone of the lives of men. For some three centuries his Epics, and others in imitation of his, were the only lengthy and regular works of any kind accessible to the mass. And when the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* were crystallised in authorised forms, they became the Sacred Books of the whole Greek race—of a race to whom sanctity meant not sacrifice, purity, or contemplation, but Beauty, the thrill and zest of life.

After these Epics had enjoyed for 500 years an undisputed ascendancy as the national creed, literature,

and education, the conquest of the East by Alexander carried them over the whole civilised world from Epirus to the Persian Gulf. In the age of the Roman Empire this ascendancy, at least as supreme poetry, was extended from the British Channel to the coast of Spain and Africa, and thence eastward and northward to the Danube and the Caspian Sea. The Church, of course, did its best to suppress Homer for nearly a thousand years—though Dante hails him as the *poeta sovrano*, who soars above all others like an eagle. But at the re-birth of ancient science and art the supremacy of Homer burst forth again, and it seems to have been increasing ever since. No poet has ever possessed such an ascendancy over the imagination of men, over so vast an area of the planet, and during such a prolonged period of time.

I said that this mighty poet appeared at the critical period of human evolution, and we may trace the steps of this process. For once, in the whole history of mankind, there was an era of civilisation, itself capable of perfect artistic presentation, simple enough to be resumed in a majestic Epic, primitive enough to be free from all discordant, revolutionary, and metaphysical blots—and this type of civilisation was transfigured by the genius of an incomparable poet. This era was the turning point of human evolution—from the stationary to the progressive form of civilisation. For how many centuries the great Oriental Theocracies had held sway we know not. As far as our imagination can pierce we recognise a long monotony of fixed and rigid life under the despotism of a priestly and royal caste. In Egypt, in Asia Minor, in the valleys of the Euphrates and of the Indus, we trace vast ages of a settled system of traditional order in hierarchic grades.

Yet around these motionless communities and

within their borders, the whole procession of human progress lay in embryo as in the womb of some mythic Mother of Mankind. The man that was to be was already stirring within her in the instinct towards new and open life, movement, and a new world. Freedom of thought and of life, the interchange of inventions, of industry, and wider knowledge of the earth could not expand in the vast autocracies settled in the plains of Asia or Africa. It could only begin on the open coasts of Syria and Asia Minor, in the south-eastern Mediterranean, the islands, bays, and mountain recesses of the complex peninsula of Greece. Thither by the aid of Phœnician, Syrian, and Cretan seamen, adventurously roving the Ægean Sea, the great industrial, artistic, and intellectual products which had been slowly elaborated during long centuries in the valleys of the Nile, the Euphrates, perhaps of the Indus, were carried to a keen race, who in the intricacies of their islands and bays could evade the pressure of theocratic conservatism.

The problem was this. Human progress, science, art, policy, and freedom could not develope within the great Theocracies. And yet they could not develope without the aid of the wealth, the arts, and knowledge which in long silent centuries the Theocracies had slowly piled up. The problem was solved first on the coast and promontories of Asia Minor, in the islands of the Ægean, and the bays of Greece. Thither traders, sailing from the Syrian and African coast, carried the germs of progress, as bees fertilise flowers whilst they are draining them for honey. The Phœnician or Cretan merchants came in search of ore, skins, woods, stones, and marbles, and they brought with them the alphabet, the use of writing, the art of working metals, the variety of arms, the science of building, and all the arts of the East and

South—fictile, textile, glyptic, plastic, and the various methods of ornament and life of which we find traces in archaic remains. We can trace them swarming up by Cyprus, Rhodes, Cnidus, Miletus, Smyrna, and the islands of the upper Ægean, and by the bay of Salamis, and of Mycenae, Tiryns, Eleusis.

This great beginning of human evolution can be traced step by step for many centuries from about 1000 B.C. on to 500 B.C. when the grand struggle between Greece and Asia, between Progress and Conservatism, began in open war. Now Homer, it is fair to guess, lived between these two periods of the old world of Theocratic fixity and the new world of freedom and change—perhaps a century or two after the decay of the primitive era of royal and semi-divine heroes, and at least three or four centuries before the great Persian wars of historic times. Living whilst the heroic traditions were fresh and mellowed by time, Homer idealised the expansion of free civilisation of the heroic forces around him; he was dimly conscious and poetically prophetic. He stood between the secular ages of human fixity and the wonderful drama of human evolution of which he felt the earliest yearning. As man of his time, he is bursting with energy, fire, curiosity, and manful audacity—the soul of Achilles and of Odysseus—but with none of the cruel doubts, confusions, and broken hopes of later ages of progress and discord—with all the moral and æsthetic dignity of the old world of tradition still glowing within him.

In this way we see how Homer opens the grand procession of Western progress, gave for ever the type of Western art, painted the dawn of human freedom, movement, adventure, the joy of life. His poems are real history, not literal history of actual events, but pictures of an idealised society, much as Milton painted

Adam and Eve in an ideal world. But if conceived as in an idealised world seen through long tradition, it gives us human nature in its simplest and freest aspect, untrammelled by any vicious system, too young and healthy to have fallen into the anarchy of mere change, or the sordid, but inevitable vices of complex civilisation. In many things the society of the heroic world is nobler than that of historic Greece. In many things there is a higher social tone. Homer inspires a genuine national feeling, which rises grandly above the narrow jealousies of the rival republics recounted by Thucydides. This is no doubt one element in the unmeasured passion for the *Iliad* which was shown by Alexander, who performed Homeric funeral games in person round the tomb of Achilles. There is also in both Epics a reverence for age, for settled forms of manners, a respect for the personal wisdom of the veteran and the sage, for the sanctity of office, whether martial or spiritual, a moral simplicity and steadfast bearing which is sadly to seek in the narratives of Herodotus, Thucydides, or the works of Zenophon, or Demosthenes. Thus Homer is sufficiently close to the theocratic order of society to preserve some of its best moral qualities, and yet he is so far out of it as to be free from its hide-bound, rigid, and exclusive spirit. He is the eternal type of the potent genius who transfigured with a radiant halo the earliest free life of human societies.

No one wants any idle comparison whether the genius of "Homer" (either, or any, Homer to satisfy the "Smasher" scholars) was equal to that of Dante or of Shakespeare. Perhaps not; perhaps it was hardly equal to one of them, or even to either. But assuredly there is in Homer a freshness, an unfailing charm, an equable atmosphere of beauty, and what Matthew Arnold calls "the grand manner,"

which neither Dante nor Shakespeare uniformly sustain. Dante has his metaphysical conundrums, which may be profound philosophy but which are hardly pure poetry, and he has his furious invectives which may be noble indignation against vice but do not inspire us with a sense of beauty or of peace. Our own Shakespeare—matchless as he is in all his greatest hours as poet, dramatist, philosopher—indulges at seasons in not a little conceit, fustian, and incongruous medley dear to his jovial, careless, irrepressible imagination.

Old Homer "never nods," for all they say—no! not even when he is telling a *Fabliau* of Zeus—if "nods" means that he bores us. He never descends from art to scholastic disquisitions, to mannerisms of an artificial preciosity, to incoherence and mere pantomime. Homer is for ever fresh, limpid, native as spring water, radiant as his own sunlit land, as inexhaustibly mobile as his own unresting sea. He may be sometimes monotonous as in the Catalogue of the Ships—which has an obvious political and national object—and he is certainly not always at the height of the Quarrel of the two Chiefs, or the funeral of Hector, or of the return of Odysseus. But in neither Epic is there a single example of incorrigible affectation, no deliberate offence against art, dignity of human life, simplicity of bearing, not a single rag of fustian, not a touch of helter-skelter, buffoonery, tinsel, sentimentality or bombast. It is hardly possible to say the same of any other poet ancient or modern—unless it be Sophocles or Milton—not even of Virgil.

Homer gave the *tone* to the Greek race—as no poet before or since has ever done to his own people—a tone at once free, manly, joyous, serene, and sympathetic, a tone, the ideal of which was a sense of beauty, proportion, symmetry, a thirst after perfection and

completeness. Homer is the one connecting link of Greek life. "Homer was the one common possession of all Greeks," says Mr. Marvin in the *New Calendar*; "their actual life was broken up by innumerable feuds and jealousies. In Homer, more than in any other historical event—more even than in Marathon or Salamis—they had a meeting-ground in the record of a united and disinterested action. The *Iliad* is the charter of Greek unity."

Those who know Greece only from books and from maps with difficulty realise the *diffused* character of what we call Greece. The Greek race never had, has not now, any actual country that can be called theirs. In historic times they were spread out from the mouths of the Nile to Marseilles, from Gades (Cadiz) to Trebizond and the Crimea on the Black Sea. In any list of eminent Greeks in history, literature and science, barely one in three will be found to be a native of continental Greece proper. Homer, Sappho, Aristotle, Archimedes, Hippocrates, and Hipparchus were not born on the mainland. If we except the dramatists, sculptors, and moralists of Athens, Pindar, and Hesiod, few great names come from what is popularly known as Greece. In truth, the Greeks were not a nation, with a local country of their own, but a nomad race bound together exclusively by a language, a literature, and a tradition. These things hold together groups of emigrants in all parts of the earth, and also in the islands and promontories of what geography names Greece, even when hardly a drop of pure Hellenic blood can be proved to survive in them. The bond is language.

A voyage round Greece and through the Ægean to the Black Sea reveals an almost endless vista of islands, headlands, bays, and peninsulas within sight of each other, but separated by reaches of restless sea.

They rise one behind the other, as if to form stepping-stones between Europe and Asia, Europe and Africa. They are peculiarly fitted to receive a succession of colonies, settlers, and conquerors, but are almost physically incapable of being welded into a real nation. This interminable panorama of mountain, sea, and harbour suggests how this Eastern Mediterranean was adapted to be the refuge of a free people striving to escape from the immovable tyrannies of Asia and of Egypt.

So, too, a voyage up to the Bosporus suggests the impression that a great struggle—or a succession of struggles—must have occurred round the southern mouth of the Hellespont. The free Greeks of the west would easily become more warlike and adventurous than the people of the coast of Asia under the shadow of the great empires of the East. The Hellespont was the key of the free passage to the vast tracts that surround Propontis and the Euxine on the side of Europe as on that of Asia. The control of that seaway would be a thing of life and death to a race of warriors and seamen thirsting for new fields of settlement and merchandise. Some time or other there must have been a grand contest around the mouth of the Scamander river on which stood the hill called Troy. The *Iliad*, fusing old sagas perhaps descended from European local combats, records the tradition of the contest. At what date, in what form, with what historic reality, either the war or the poem took place we may never know. But the remains at Hissarlik are there to prove a long succession of strongholds of some kind being built, destroyed, restored, and abandoned.

Our admiration for the poems must not lead us to exaggerate the moral value of the poet. They served to ennoble, unite, and inspire the Greek race—but

they are stamped with the innate defects of the Greek type of civilisation. There is wanting in them the majestic sense of discipline, of law, of patience, reverence for the ideals of purity, virtue, and courage found in Republican Rome. Nay, even the late and more artificial poem of Virgil inspires a higher type of patriotism and duty. The Gods of the Homeric Olympus are very human personages beside the less material deities of old Rome. Still less does Homer know anything of the spiritual communion of Soul with Godhead such as we have in the Psalms, or in Isaiah, or in Job. And far less is there a trace of the passion of purity, truth, self-denial, and love, such as the world owes to St. Paul, or Augustine, or Gregory, or Ambrose. The Epics are Greek—frankly and nakedly Greek, noble in their simple human nature, fresh with the dayspring of human freedom, serene, joyous, sociable, like a statue by Polycleitus of a young athlete, strong, nude, and unashamed of its corporeal loveliness—but crudely Greek, in its utter ignorance of purity, higher love, or spiritual exaltation, too emotional for perfect courage, too sensitive for the sternest ordeal of duty, always near the sensual, or at least the sensuous, too eager after beauty to form a solid moral code.

We must take Homer as we find him, with the joyous, artless, radiant outburst of the poet's soul, seeking to rouse, warm, and delight his age by the picture of free men, nobly living their lives in manly self-reliance, eager to know, keen to observe, thirsting after beauty, and ardent to cultivate their entire nature to every point in its vitality in perfection —in the sense in which in later ages Goethe conceived it. In Goethe it ended too readily in self-adoration, affectation, and even vice, for "to develope our nature to the full" is no sufficient gospel to-day. But in

the age of Homer, when men were awakening from the weary millenniums of theocratic conservatism, it was perhaps the most needful, it may be the only possible, gospel. And in the immortal poet whom antiquity called Homer, whom we fancy to have lived and sung in one of those lovely islands which fringe the Asian coast, this gospel found an infallible prophet, priest, and lawgiver.

The *Iliad* was the text-book of Greek education in a way more exclusive than any book has ever been—even the Bible. We are told that many men could repeat it by heart, which disposes of the impossibility of learning to recite it without writing. When Pheidias said that he drew his conception of the Olympian Zeus from Homer, he must have meant the grand spirit of Homer in general; for Zeus in the *Iliad* cuts a rather poor figure. When Æschylus said his tragedies were "morsels from the feast of Homer," he must have been speaking in an equally general way, for we find almost nothing in common between the extant tragedies and the *Iliad* either in myth or in *ethos*. All that those rather dubious anecdotes mean is that poets and artists felt inspiration from their earliest association of heroic and divine beings from the ideal world, as Handel and Raphael may have drawn theirs from the Old and the New Testament.

Homer sums up the genius of Greece more completely than Dante sums up the genius of the Middle Ages, because the Greek genius was far simpler and more capable of harmonious artistic expression. The *Divine Comedy* tells us little indeed of the lay, chivalrous, satiric side of Feudalism. But Homer gives us his early Greek world with all its weakness and even its vices, its naked love of physical beauty, and its audacity and irrepressible thirst for novelty, movement, freedom, and joy.

In these latter days of revolution, doubt, the babel of rival schemes, of new worlds, and the interminable battle of factions, we turn with a sense of rest to listen again to the poems which delighted us in boyhood. What charm is felt as the soft ripple of these melodious lines flows over the weary brain! I remember in more than one holiday voyage when I was reposing after work, how I lay on the deck of a ship as it sailed past the birthplace (as is said) of the poet, or past the plain of Troy, amidst the shimmering dimples of the Ægean waves, with the blue folds of Ida and Gargarus rising over the plain of the Scamander; and distant Samothrace with its gigantic peaks towering away high over Tenedos and Lemnos. The very waters seemed to murmur in exquisite cadences the magical rhythm of the old lines. The very bays and hills and promontories seemed to me to ring with the tale of Hector and Achilles.

This soft, soothing, purifying echo may be heard even to-day by those who will give an hour to the old poem—so fresh, bright, natural, and spontaneous is the soul of it. Give but an hour to the blind old man, and you will find the wearied spirit carried away to the Islands of the Blest, where heroes were wont to meet deities from Olympus, where Athene whispered counsel to warrior and chief, and where the flowers burst forth under the feet of some divine being who had descended to man. And then the tired spirit listens to the roll of the Homeric billow with the refreshing sound that the townsman hears when he scents the sea after long absence. A flush of Nature, of beauty, of rest passes over the soul.

Is this *religion*? Yes, it is!

Religion is the complex development of man's

highest nature in accordance with the true constitution of the World and Humanity in its fullness. And that which stimulates human nature and teaches it to be at peace in its home on earth—this is the task of religion.

CHAPTER IX

ON THE ATTIC DRAMA

In the Greek world the higher Poetry, in Epic, Hymns, Lyrics, and Dramas, stood to these peoples as a religious power. It was the direct outcome of their religious traditions and was a familiar manifestation of religion. The great poets were really priests; the Epics and Hymns were ritual and services; the grander Poems were at once educational Scriptures and congregational manuals of devotion. This does not mean, as modern church people may be apt to suppose, that since Polytheism was a poor, debased, and unspiritual substitute for religion, they had to fall back on mere human poetry, and were fain to take fine poems and beautiful forms of earthly life as being the nearest symbol of things sacred or supreme that they could find in their lives.

Not so! Greek poetry, in its highest forms, was religious in the true sense, as human religion understands the term; that it is religious for us to-day, as much as for the Lesbians or Athenians of old; that Homer has done as much for the true spiritual progress of mankind as Moses, David, or Isaiah; that the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* should be as much part of our Bible as the Psalms or the Major and Minor Prophets. We are altogether on the wrong path so long as we

fail to see that poetry must be inspired by religion, if it claims to be great poetry at all; and that religion must be humanly and really poetic, if it is ever again to be the supreme master and guide of human life. Pedantry and scepticism combined have placed a gulf between religion and poetry, by which both have suffered. Poetry has become too much of a literary amusement; and religion has become too much of a mystical quietism.

This, of course, implies that by religion we mean a power which is co-extensive with human nature and can exert its influence over the whole of human life. Religion must be made real and human through great poetry. And poetry must be made social and spiritual through practical religion. No religion can permanently touch man's life unless it speaks through great human poetry, or, if it pretends to vaunt itself, as independent of, and superior to, great human poetry. No poetry has abiding power or can rise to the highest level, if it claims to be outside of any religious sympathy or sanction. No mere literature can be great poetry, just as no anti-human hypotheses can be practical religion. Thus, the mission of the Epics was grander and more truly sacred than that of the Psalms of Israel, for they sprang out of wider and more humane sympathies with life as a whole than Hebrew War Songs and Lamentations.

This is more true of the great dramatists of Athens than it is of Homer. And we need to dwell on the spiritual meaning of the highest triumphs of that wonderful art, which has been the standard of the drama to the civilised world for two thousand years. Of all other dramatists Æschylus presents us with the obvious type of the religious uses of the drama. We know far more of Æschylus than of Homer, of the Attic drama than of the early Epic. There tragedy

had its origin in religion; it was itself a religious ceremony, and was a function of religion surrounded with religious symbols and forms. And we know the soul and nature of Æschylus as well as we know that of Isaiah or St. Paul, or Dante or Milton. No great poet has ever more completely revealed himself to us as a man. No poet has ever more passionately thrown his own soul into his works. No poet (not Dante, nor Milton, nor Wordsworth) has manifested in verse a more profound sense of vital religion.

Æschylus was born at Eleusis near Athens five and thirty years before the great Persian invasion. His origin and early history are full of significance. Eleusis was one of the oldest and most famous cities of Greece, associated for a thousand years down to Christian ages with the Mysteries which undoubtedly had a primitive source in the Oriental myths of Nature Worship. Putting aside the crude Greek derivation of the name of the city from the "Arrival" of Demeter, I always associate the name with the Hebrew town of Eleph (or the Ox), allotted to Benjamin by Joshua, and said to denote the pastoral character of the tribe. Eleusis stands in the rich Thriasian plain, and may have been a very early settlement of some Phœnician or Syrian traders, who left their name and the mystic rites of some Goddess of the abundance of Earth. It is said that his father, Euphorion, was an official of the Mysteries, and thus from childhood he was associated with the most venerable ritual of the ancient world.

There is a tradition that, as a boy after attending the representation of the Dionysian festival, the god appeared to him in a vision and bade him devote himself to the drama, then only in its rudimentary stage. At the age of twenty-six he presented his first tragedy. His first victory was not won till he

was forty-one, about midway between the great battles of Marathon and of Salamis, in both of which he and his brothers had a glorious part. As a poet, Æschylus had a singularly late development. None of his extant dramas were produced until he was forty-seven. His greatest tragedy, the *Trilogy*, the greatest tragedy in all literature, was not produced till he was sixty-seven. Like so many other Athenians he was accused of impiety, and was exiled or withdrew for safety like Miltiades, Themistocles, Aristeides, Thucydides, Alcibiades, Socrates, Xenophon, Pheidias, Plato, and Euripides. The Athenian democracy prosecuted its greatest soldiers as well as its greatest thinkers, as is the way of ignorant and jealous mobs.

Æschylus shares with Dante, Cervantes, and Camoens the character of a poet who had fought in pitched battles, and I often think Shakespeare must have served abroad in his youth. But Æschylus is far the greatest warrior of all, for he took an heroic part in the two most famous battles of the world. His poetry breathes throughout the fire of war; and in his *Persians* he gives a vivid picture of the greatest sea-fight in all history. By a fortunate coincidence in the great fight off Salamis, on which hung the fate of the future civilisation of Europe, there was serving in the victorious fleet the greatest tragic poet in the history of the world; and a few years after it this poet presented the scene to his triumphant comrades in a lyric and dramatic pageant which is still the noblest Hymn to patriotism in the records of man. There is none more glorious than the speech of the Herald to the mother of Xerxes as he tells the awful tale of ruin and defeat.

> Then the trumpet rang out its rousing note
> along their ranks above the splashing of the

waves, the hurtling of the oars, and the captain's call of command. And as their serried ranks dashed on together a great roar rose, so that we could hear them cry :—

> "Sons of the Greeks charge on. Strike for the freedom of your fatherland. For the freedom of your children and your wives and the shrines of your fathers' gods. Fight for the tombs of your forefathers. The struggle this day is for your all on earth."

Æschylus is the poet of valour and patriotism as he recorded (it is said) on his own tomb—

> "Æschylus, son of Euphorion, lies beneath this monument: he died in fertile Gela [in Sicily, and in exile, away from his own land]. The weald by Marathon may tell the tale of his proven valour, and the long-tressed Median, for he had full knowledge of it."

Not a word of poetry !

I hold the loss of the seventy plays of Æschylus, of which we have no trace but titles and fragments, to be perhaps the most cruel blow that literature has ever sustained. Not only was Æschylus the greatest tragic poet of the world, but he was the creator of tragedy as an art—in a way that no other man has ever created an art. We do not believe that the author of the *Iliad* created epic; nor did Pheidias create sculpture. We know that Shakespeare did not create the Elizabethan drama. Nor did Herodotus, "the father of History," really create historical record. Nor did Boccaccio create the novel, nor did Giotto create modern painting. But Æschylus did create Tragedy—which before him was a sort of Mummer's

rhapsody at a Sacred Fair. It was Æschylus who invented dialogue and action by doubling the actors, and he soon followed Sophocles by accepting a third actor as well as the Chorus. He limited and arranged the Chorus, which now became the accompaniment instead of the protagonist. He invented the use of majestic scenery as a background, he gave the actors a noble and imposing costume, and threw over the whole stage that atmosphere of sublimity and heroic dignity which breathes in every line he wrote.

This mighty genius conceived in mind and created in visible form one of the grandest instruments of human art. He transformed what had been down to his time a lyric celebration of Bacchic emotion into an inspiring expression of heroic character and life. Perhaps it was in this sense that, according to a plausible tradition, he called his plays "morsels from the rich banquets of Homer." His extant dramas deal but slightly with the epic personages and myths; and the saying may mean only that he substituted great poetic action for the traditional ritual of sacred revelry.

He made the theatre a new vehicle for transfiguring the great lessons of human destiny and moral struggle. In this way, no doubt, Cicero calls Æschylus a Pythagorean, as a follower of the most spiritual and social of philosophic creeds. Æschylus was a stern and passionate supporter of the old traditions and of the Homeric conservation of a semi-feudal chieftainship. He was a warm apostle of the pervading power of religion in the sense of a just Providence, of the duties of hospitality, of the sanctity of oaths, of claims of family, and of the marriage bond. And in the deeply ethical and spiritual sincerity with which he treated these, he did not scruple to break away from the formal theologies and obsolete formulas of

past ages—even holding up Zeus to moral indignation, casting aside the doubtful intervention of divine oracles. Thus, conservative as he was, Æschylus offended the ignorant democracy of a jealous people, and was accused of impiety and want of faith.

Æschylus was thus at once a great reformer in religion and also a profound conservative in morals. His conception of virtuous life and of an overruling Providence was far too spiritual to fall in with the archaic licence of the Homeric Olympus. And withal his conception of the primary institutions and duties of civilised life was abhorrent of the critical and sceptical logic of the new sophistry. Thus he stood fast by all that was solid and enduring in the public and domestic traditions of his forefathers, whilst he felt that a new humane and social morality could not be bound by the popular hymnology about Zeus and Hera, Aphrodite and Bacchus. In the religious aspect Æschylus was a Puritan, an Idealist, a Reformer, a sort of Athenian Latimer, Cromwell, or Milton.

Primarily, Æschylus is a warrior, a patriot, a man of honour. His style rings with a clarion call to arms. His persons breathe the heroic spirit of the great age. There is in him much of the spirit of the older Romans, of Coriolanus, Camillus, Fabricius, and Cato. In his *Prometheus*, Æschylus ranges almost with Shelley in a magnificent appeal to the efforts of Humanity to free itself from antique tyranny and superstition. Would that we could have had Æschylus' play *Prometheus Released*. The *Prometheus* as we have it is one of the most stupendous triumphs of human imagination—hardly a drama, or, if a drama, a species of sacred Oratorio ; for it is more a lyric, or a monologue, than a tragedy, but as a Dithyrambic Hymn to the power of Will in Man it has hardly its equal in literature sacred or profane.

For tragedy pure and simple, with all the incidents of a great drama worked out to a systematic end, the Trilogy of *Oresteia* stands in the foremost place. In mass, in intensity, in accumulated horror, in unity of idea and of tone, and in statuesque sublimity of execution, this triple tragedy has never been equalled. We need not doubt that *Lear* and *Hamlet* have a subtle and profound poetry even higher and wider, or that *Othello* and *Macbeth* have ethical mysteries even more intricate. But the *Trilogy* remains still supreme in concentrated majesty and power.

I go further, and insist that in the quality of sublimity no poet has been quite the equal of Æschylus — neither Dante nor Shakespeare nor Milton — I mean in the creative fire of imagination that can bring to life before the eyes of all mankind, so long as human language shall remain, beings so imposing, so original, so superhuman and yet so living; nor has any poet painted scenes of weird imagery so sublime, so gorgeous, and withal so eternal in their realism and truth. Take the scene on Caucasus at the opening of the *Prometheus*, the magnificent silence of the tortured demi-god, the lyrical beauty of the sea-nymphs who fly round him in pity, the indomitable defiance of the catastrophe, the prophetic constancy of the Friend of Man in martyrdom amidst the fury of Gods above and the crash of Nature.

I take again the bursting forth of the Beacon fire which has been watched and longed for during ten weary years, the home-coming of the victorious monarch amid sinister warnings, mysterious chants of coming doom, the piercing wail of Cassandra, the intolerable agony of suspense which swells to an oppressive omen as the Queen leads her victim within. Then the silence, the awe, the mystery, the sense of impending bloodshed broken at last by the shriek of

the prophetess and the groan of the king. And, whilst all without are torn with anxiety and alarm, Clytemnestra appears with the bloody axe, avowing and glorying in her crime, defying all who might dare to question her right to take vengeance for her child—standing over the dead like a lioness at bay over her prey. The whole range of the drama contains no scene so tremendous, so vivid, so rich in mass, pathos, and intensity of colour.

It is significant that the men who, to my knowledge, have held Æschylus in the highest honour—one in the ancient world, one in the modern world—are these two: Aristophanes, who heard the plays on the stage, and Auguste Comte in a miserable French prose translation of the eighteenth century. I was looking over Comte's books in his rooms in Paris with Pièrre Laffitte when I found a dingy 12mo prose version of Æschylus. "How could he have such a book?" I asked. Laffitte replied, "Well! he had no other, he could not read Greek." And with this little scrap of a translation Comte seized the overpowering superiority of Æschylus to all the tragedians—the profoundly religious bent of his genius, his Homeric soul, his passionate revolt from the old Theocracy, his inspiration of the great hour of Greek heroism, the defence of the new world of freedom and inquiry against the oriental tyranny of the old Theocracies.

Æschylus was one of the great religious teachers of the world, to be ranked with Isaiah, Pythagoras, perhaps with Mahomet and even Dante. Comte saw what Aristophanes could not see, that Æschylus is the poetic voice of the one great epoch in Greek history. Aristophanes in the *Frogs* gives a wonderful picture of Æschylus' style. He brings out the heroic temper, the proud and stately self-will, the fiery imagination, the avalanche of great thoughts and high ideals, and the

superabundant splendour that he threw into his work. The chorus begins as the poetic duel between Euripides and Æschylus opens—with Sophocles for umpire.

> "What torrents of fiercely-battling words shall we now have! They will shine like the glancing of helms in the fight, waving with crested plumes on high! What high-prancing charges of speech from the mighty master of mind! How he will shake his shaggy mane and bristle his bushy locks, knitting in wrath his terrible brows and roaring as a lion over his prey, hurling huge-jointed phrases about as if they were masses of timber from a ship's side, bound fast in bolts of iron; and these he will breathe forth with the Titanic blast of his lungs."

SOPHOCLES AND EURIPIDES

Aristophanes does not venture to put Sophocles in competition with Æschylus; he adroitly reserves him to be the arbiter; but he makes Euripides overwhelmed by his tremendous rival. The comic poet is fully alive to the subtle psychology of Euripides, to his ingenuity and invention, his literary audacity, and his inexhaustible pathos. We all feel that, and to-day more than ever. Euripides was the herald of "modernity," and we are all "modernists" to-day—even "futurists": the twentieth century is Euripides' "day"! But, to compare Æschylus with Euripides is to compare Dante with Ibsen, or Milton with Robert Browning. They are not *in pari materia*; they have no common ground.

So quickly did the great spiritual aim of the Attic drama die out, so early did literary refinement and artistic enjoyment of cultured form succeed to an imaginative gospel of noble life, that at the age of fifty-seven Æschylus was displaced in the judgment

of his time by the exquisite art of Sophocles, who was but twenty-seven years old. Æschylus himself was forty-one before he won the prize. With some seventy-seven plays he won the prize but thirteen times, whilst Sophocles and Euripides carried it off twice or three times as often. By the voice of antiquity, including that of Aristotle, it would seem Sophocles was the tragic poet, as Homer was the epic poet. Such are the verdicts of literary prizes and of Academies of Letters.

To be devoted to the glorious power of Æschylus is not to be blind to the magical versatility of Euripides — much less to the exquisite grace of Sophocles. His consummate mastery of tone, with its severe abhorrence of violence and monstrosities, the matchless purity of his language, and the subtle symmetry of his tragic catastrophes—all as inimitable and as faultless as a statue of Praxiteles—have made Sophocles, in ancient and in modern times, the ideal of the literary conception of great tragedy. Aristotle found, as the world has found, the type of tragedy in the two dramas of *Œdipus*. The wonderful ingenuity of the plot, even with some inexplicable dilemmas as to actual facts, the terrible winding of the net of Fate round a noble and innocent man, the fall from greatness and prosperity to abject misery, the *crescendo* of horror, pity, and confusion make *King Œdipus* the most consummate work of tragic art. And then, in the *Œdipus at Colonus*, the mystic transfiguration of the blind and outlawed King into a demi-god amidst the sweet peace of the local sanctuary and the ministration of his daughters forms the relief from the intolerable agony of the King's dethronement and torture. As we study the three tragedies of the *Oresteia*, the two tragedies of *Œdipus*, we protest against the error of isolating Greek tragedies from

their sequences, of allied series and the current myths. Almost every Attic drama was an Act, as it were, of a complex catastrophe, or was an incident in a familiar myth. Hardly any one stood by itself as *Hamlet* or *Othello* stand complete within their own Acts. When we see *Œdipus the King* on the stage we know nothing of the lyric restoration to peace and rest in the sublime *finale* of *Œdipus at Colonus*. That is unpresentable on our stage. And without it the agony of the first tragedy is too poignant.

But with all the majestic perfection of the two *Œdipus* plays and of the others of Sophocles, I do not find in them the Titanic imagery of the *Prometheus*, nor the sublime wrestling of heroes with Gods and Destiny as told in the *Trilogy*. Though it is difficult to rank the *Prometheus Bound*—the only one that is left us—as a tragedy pure and simple, yet I hold it to be an Apocalypse of human power quite unequalled even by Dante, Calderon, or Milton. Nor did Shakespeare ever touch the tremendous intensity of Clytemnestra's blood-guiltiness, defiance, punishment, and the expiation of her son and executioner. No! that mighty Passion-Play of the primeval world stands forth for ever as the tragic tale graven deepest in the soul of Humanity.

It is true that with Sophocles the moral problems of humanity are by no means overlooked or distorted. They are constantly and justly faced. But they are placed on a much more practical and logical plane, and are treated with far less of mysticism and awe, with far more indulgence and suavity than by Æschylus. Sophocles never defies the antique superstitions of his time; he uses them like a consummate artist; he never risks an accusation of impiety or of "modern" thoughts. He presents to his hearers the temptations, vices, and punishments of

men with all the careful balance of a conscientious judge in a court of morality and honour. He is always, like Bossuet, a pathetic preacher of courtly sermons on the ways of Providence and the sorrows of man. It is an exquisite and edifying type of religious teaching. But it has not altogether the passionate inspiration of a Paul, a Dante, or a Milton. Now Æschylus had this in a measure never approached by drama, whether before or since.

They who place Euripides below both Æschylus and Sophocles do not dispute the splendid versatility, pathos, and subtlety of that poet, and are not blind to the world-wide influence which he has continued to shed over the whole field of dramatic literature from his own day to our own. In Greece for generations he ruled supreme. Roman tragedy, such as it was, was founded on his ideas, and Latin plays were rude parodies of his. The French dramas were essentially Euripidean. His laws, forms, and ethic held them spell-bound and hypnotised. And to a great extent this was so with the Italian tragic drama, and the Frenchified English drama of Dryden and Otway. And to-day, with ourselves, the influence of Euripides is again rising to the front rank, largely owing to the work of one of the most brilliant and most learned scholars of our age. Now, a power of this enduring and pervading kind could have been achieved only by a poet of the very highest order in the literature of the world.

The key to the problem of the relative greatness of Euripides turns on the point of his leading an artistic and moral revolution in Attic drama. It is agreed by all that he did this. Was it a glorious and unqualified success? If it were not this, it was a step downwards in a (perhaps inevitable) decadence that the state of Athens, its art, its literature, and

its manners all shared alike. Euripides, it is certain, attempted to develope the tragic drama somewhat in the lines which have been splendidly filled in modern ages by dramatists from Marlowe to Ibsen and by romance from Boccaccio and Chaucer down to Richardson, Goethe, and Victor Hugo. Clearly, Euripides is the most "modern" of the ancient dramatists. But the revolution he founded was fatally incomplete and distorted. This prophet of a new epoch was not free, but was in the bonds of the old epoch. He sought to "modernise" the heroic world. And in the end he was neither really heroic nor truly modern.

The career of Euripides coincides with the long agony and disastrous war of Athens which led to her ruin. It was a time of burning questions, of wild expectations, and angry revolt from cherished ideals. The dramas of Euripides seethe with all these—they are critical, disputatious, sceptical, sentimental, and cynical. They cover the conventions and sanctities of old time with scorn as of a Voltaire and a Swift. Do they establish or even suggest the sanctities and verities of a new time? It can hardly be said that anything solid or wholesome is given in lieu of what the poet ridicules and condemns. With all his exquisite lyricism, pathos, brilliancy of invention, psychologic subtlety and bold thought, Euripides remained a social and artistic revolutionary. Was the revolution pregnant with great issues? In his hands, in that age of chaos and loose thought, it was not destined to a great new birth. They who hold that any revolution, any new ideas were a good thing in themselves will hold to Euripides, come what may. They who feel that Shelley, Browning, Ibsen, and Tolstoy have displaced and made obsolete Dante, Milton, Spenser, and Wordsworth will take their stand with Young Athens when it gave the first

prize in the festival of Dionysus to the author of *Hippolytus* and *Electra*. For my part, I take my stand along with Aristophanes in the *Frogs*.

But, in casting a humble vote in the greatest contest in all human literature, I would not be taken to undervalue the wonderful gifts of Euripides in his own special lines—the limpid charm of his verse, the passion of his heroines, the subtle vision into character, motive, and intellect. We always begin our zest for Greek tragedy with Euripides. We know him better than his rivals. We have far more of his works to study, and we find them more easy, more familiar, more akin to our time. In the ancient world he was the representative poet of Athens, and no doubt he will long so continue to be.

The inner purpose of Æschylus was entirely that of Isaiah, Ezekiel, Dante, and Milton, the presentment of the great problem of human life, the sense of an overruling Providence, the moral greatness and force of the just man, the inevitable ruin and shame that awaits the unjust man in the end, the retribution that follows crime, the inheritance of evil, the triumph of virtue, courage, purity, and good faith. Whatever be the exact meaning of Aristotle's definition of the function of Tragedy that it was "to purify the soul by pity and terror," the sense of it is, to rouse the spirit and cleanse it from all that is sordid, selfish, torpid, and mean by touching our humane sympathies to the quick, by calling forth the dormant feelings of interest in our fellow-men, of pain at their sufferings, and enthusiasm in their heroism; to stir the worldly self-contented spirit, fattened by comfort, ease, and enjoyment, to a consciousness of the tremendous issues for good and evil with which human life is surrounded; to force the dull soul to see Retribution dogging the steps of injustice and crime and Ruin standing beside

Prosperity and Self-glorification—just as Death stands beside the rich and prosperous man in some mediæval Dance of Death. This was ever the aim of the great prophets and preachers. They too sought to purify the soul by pity and terror. It is the aim of the Vision of Ezekiel, of the cry of Isaiah.

> "Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. . . . And the destruction of the transgressors and of the sinners shall be together, and they that forsake the Lord shall be consumed. . . . And the strong shall be as tow and the maker of it as a spark, and they shall both burn together, and none shall quench them."

That is the spirit of Æschylus in even grander imagery. There is nothing fanciful in thus identifying the aim of Æschylus with that of the preachers of the Hebrews, of the Middle Ages, of the Puritans and the Reformers. The drama which Æschylus founded in the highest moment of Greek history lasted on until the superstitions of mediæval fanaticism extinguished it with all the splendid creations of Polytheism in art. This drama absorbed the epos, the lyrics, the sententious poetry of Greece. It stood in the place of literature, of sacred books, almost of a priesthood. It soon lost its religious and much of its moral force, and degenerated into a literary amusement. But in the hands of Æschylus it was uniformly profound, wise, and religious, and reached a sublimity which this tragic art has never equalled since, and which, in the extinction of the mystical conceptions of the primitive world of free imagination, it may never reach again in equal dignity and power.

THE COMIC DRAMA

The comedy of the *Frogs* is the most typical product of the Attic mind and character, and undoubtedly is one of the most amazing triumphs of poetic wit in the entire history of literature. It was produced at Athens at the moment of her utmost strain and military exhaustion, just before her final annihilation as a dominant and imperial state. Never had she seemed more recklessly gay: absorbed in a trial, not of battle but of wits, rejoicing in the songs and sounds and sights of the country amidst the horrors of the crowded plague-stricken city. That was the hour when Aristophanes sought to relieve the gloom around his fellow-citizens by one of his brightest, maddest, drollest phantasmagorias, of which the scene is Hades and the river Styx, and the principal player the tipsy god of the Dramatic festival.

As a poet, pure and simple, in the whole history of literature, no one except Shakespeare himself can be thought of as the rival of Aristophanes in versatility and range of spontaneous imagination. He is not the peer of Shakespeare, of course, in tragic power, nor of Æschylus, indeed; nor in sustained vision of a higher world does he approach Dante, or Calderon, or Milton. But, in the magical combination of exquisite lyrics, riotous fancy, with immortal satire such as Rabelais, Swift, and Molière hardly reached, Aristophanes stands supreme. Shelley has no more ethereal pictures of the heavens above than we find in the Choruses of the *Frogs* and the *Clouds*; Keats never sang the song of the nightingale with more luscious music; Goethe never swept us more swiftly down into an underworld of phantoms or up into a dreamland of winged and superhuman spirits. But

these are but incidents and by-play in the Attic comedy.

The real Aristophanes is on a larger and profounder plane of thought when he scourges the demagogue, reveals the mountebank in his impudent imposture, mocks at the pretender to wisdom, jeers the silly ambition of unsexed females, and denounces the public treason of oratorical windbags. This is the true Aristophanes, and in this, the essential work of great comedy, no one but Shakespeare can be put beside him in ancient or in modern times. Menander, Plautus, Terence were too local in their scene, and belong to their special eras and people. Molière is too purely Parisian, too much the creature of the Grand Roi, as Cervantes is too purely Spanish and Renascence, Rabelais is too gross and ribald, and Swift too brutal and sardonic. No one of these has the dithyrambic audacity, the aerial music, and the wild laughter of Aristophanes; nor does any one, as he does, touch every nerve that quivers in the nature of man, nor speak, as he does, to all races and to all times.

Nay, I go further, for I hold the masterpiece of Aristophanes—the denunciation of Cleon's demagogy—to be, as a triumph of wit and certainly of patriotic valour, even a bigger thing than Shakespeare's masterpiece in Falstaff. The *Frogs*, the *Birds*, the *Clouds* have poetry equal to that of *Midsummer Night's Dream* or the *Tempest*; but the Great Assize of Tragedy, the Imperial Jingoism of Athenian ambition, the wordy scepticism of metaphysical sophistry, the unsexing of the New Woman—these are subjects of comic philosophy more eternal in their use, more deeply rooted in human nature than even the finest successes of our Tudor or Stuart comedy. No reasonable man to-day can justify Aristophanes' out-

rages on decency, nor adopt his personal antipathies and party passions, but as I claim for Æschylus the first prize in the Tragedies of the World, so I claim for Aristophanes the first prize as the greatest of all comedians.

CHAPTER X

BYZANTINE HISTORY IN THE EARLY MIDDLE AGES *

In one of the most suggestive of his essays, Professor Freeman calls the Roman Empire on the Bosporus "the surest witness to the unity of history."[1] And Professor Bury, whose great work has done so much to develope that truth, insists that the old Roman Empire did not cease to exist until the year 1453, when Mohammed the Conqueror stormed Constantinople. The line of Roman emperors, he says, "continued in unbroken succession from Octavius Augustus to Constantine Palaeologus."[2] Since George Finlay, nearly fifty years ago, first urged this truth on public attention, all competent historians have recognised the continuity of the civilisation which Constantine seated on the Golden Horn; and they have done justice to its many services to the West as well as to the East.[3] But the nature of that continuity, the extent of these services, are still but dimly understood by the general public. Prejudice, bigotry, and rhetoric have done much to warp the popular conception of one of the chief keys to general history. In spite of all that scholars have said, the old sophism lingers on that the empire and civilisation of Rome ended with Romulus Augustulus in 476, until, in a sense, it was

* The Rede Lecture, Cambridge, 1900.

revived by the great Charles; that, in the meanwhile, a vicious and decaying parody of the Empire eked out its contemptible life on the Bosporus.

Such was the language of the popular writers of the last century, and Gibbon himself did something to encourage this view. When, in his 48th chapter, he talked of Byzantine annals as "a tedious and uniform tale of weakness and misery," and saw that he still had more than eight centuries of the history of the world to compress into his last two volumes, we suspect that the great master of description was beginning to feel exhausted by his gigantic task.[4] In any case, his undervaluing Byzantine history as a whole is the main philosophical weakness of his magnificent work of art. The phrases of Voltaire, Lebeau, and of papal controversialists still linger in the public mind;[5] and in the meantime there exists no adequate history in English of the whole course of the Roman Empire on the Bosporus. This still forms the great *lacuna* in our historical literature.

Modern historians continually warn their readers to cast off the obsolete fallacy that a gulf of so-called dark ages separates ancient from modern history; that ancient history closes with the settlement of the Goths in Rome, whilst modern history mysteriously emerges somewhere in the ninth or the tenth century. We all know now that, when the northern races settled in Western Europe, they assimilated much that they inherited from Rome. In truth, the Roman Empire, transplanted on to the Bosporus, maintained for many centuries an unbroken sequence of imperial life; retaining, transforming, and in part even developing, the administrative system, the law, the literature, the arts of war, the industry, the commerce, which had once been concentrated by the Cæsars in Italy. After all the researches of Finlay, Freeman, Bryce, Hodgkin,

Bury, Fisher, Oman, Dill, to say nothing of a crowd of French, German, Italian, and Russian specialists, we must regard these facts as amongst the truisms of general history.

The continuity of government and civilisation in the Empire of New Rome was far more real than it was in Western Europe. New Rome never suffered such abrupt breaks, dislocations, such changes of local seat, of titular and official form, of language, race, law, and manners, as marked the re-settlement of Western Europe. For eleven centuries Constantinople remained the continuous seat of an imperial Christian government, during nine centuries of which its administrative sequence was hardly broken. For nine centuries, until the piratical raid of the Crusaders, Constantinople preserved Christendom, industry, the machinery of government, and civilisation from successive torrents of barbarians. For seven centuries it protected Europe from the premature invasions of the Crescent; giving very much in the meantime to the East, receiving very much from the East, and acting as the intellectual and industrial clearing-house between Europe and Asia. For at least five centuries, from the age of Justinian, it was the nurse of the arts, of manufacture, commerce, and literature, to Western Europe, where all these were still in the making. And it was the direct and immediate source of civilisation, whether secular or religious, to the whole of Eastern Europe, from the Baltic to the Ionian Sea.

In picturesque and impressive incidents, in memorable events and dominant characters, in martial achievement and in heroic endurance, perhaps even in sociologic lessons, Byzantine history from the first Constantine to the last is as rich as the contemporary history either of the West or of the East. It would be a paradox to compare the great Charles, or the great

Otto, or our own blameless Alfred, with even the best of the Byzantine rulers of their age, or to place such men as Gregory the Great, or Popes Silvester or Hildebrand, below even the best of the Patriarchs of the Holy Wisdom. Nor have the Orthodox Church or the Eastern Romans such claims on the gratitude of mankind as are due to the Church Catholic and the Teutonic heroes who founded modern Europe. But the three centuries of Byzantine history from the rise of the Isaurian dynasty in 717 down to the last of the Basilian emperors in 1028, will be found as well worthy of study as the same three centuries in Western Europe, *i.e.* from the age of Charles Martel to that of Henry the Saint.

During those three centuries at least, the eighth, ninth, and tenth, the Emperors of New Rome ruled over a settled State which, if not as powerful in arms, was far more rich in various resources, more cultured, more truly modern, than any in Western Europe. I am not about to attempt, in the short space at my disposal, even a brief sketch of these three centuries of crowded story. I purpose only to touch on some of the special features of its civilisation and culture, which, for the three centuries so often called the darkest ages of Europe, made Constantinople the wonder and envy of the world. Byzantine history has its epochs of ebb and flow, of decay, convulsion, anarchy, and recovery, as had the empire at Old Rome. This Roman Empire was the most continuous institution in Europe, next after the Catholic Church; and, like the Church, it had the same marvellous recuperative energy. It is true that it had none of the latent power of growth which Frank, Lombard, Burgundian, and Saxon possessed. It was from first to last a conservative, tenacious, and more or less stationary force. But it kept alive the principles of order, stability, and con-

tinuity, in things material and in things intellectual, when all around it, on the east and on the west, was racked with the throes of new birth or tossed in a weltering chaos. Byzantine story is stained red with blood, is black with vice, is disfigured with accumulated waste and horror—but what story of the eighth, ninth, and tenth centuries is not so disfigured and stained? And even the atrocities of Constantinople may be matched in the history of the Papacy in these very ages, and in the intrigues and conspiracies which raged around the thrones of Frank, Lombard, Burgundian, and Goth.

Strangely enough, the inner life of this Byzantine history has yet to be opened to the English reader. For these three centuries that I am treating, Finlay has given us about 400 pages ;[6] and Finlay, alas, is no longer abreast of modern authorities, and was writing, let us remember, the history of Greece. Mr. Bury's two volumes stop short as yet with Irene at the end of the eighth century, and Dr. Hodgkin has drawn rein at the same date. For the period I am treating, we have but a hundred pages or so in Mr. Bury's second volume, and the mordant epigrams of Gibbon are about of equal bulk.[7] For the law, the literature, the economics, the administration, the ceremonial, the art, the trade, the manners, the theology of this epoch we have to depend on a mass of foreign monographs,—French, German, Greek, and now Russian and American,—on Rambaud, Schlumberger, Labarte, Bayet, Zachariae, Krumbacher, Heimbach, Krause, Neander, Salzenberg, Huebsch, Kondakov, De Vogüé, Bordier, Texier, Hergenröther, Heyd, Fr. Michel, Silvestre, Didron, Mortreuil, Duchesne, Paspates, Buzantios, Van Millingen, Frothingham.[8] So far as I know, we had not, in 1900, a single English study on the special developments of civilisation on the Bosporus from the fourth to the

twelfth century. Here are a score of monographs open to the research of English historians.

Current misconceptions of Byzantine history mainly arise from inattention to the enormous period it covers, and to the wide differences which mark the various epochs and dynasties. The whole period from the first Constantine to the last is about equal to the period from Romulus to Theodosius. The Crusaders' raid, in 1204, utterly ruined Constantinople, and from that time till the capture by the Turks it was a feeble wreck.[9] Even at the date of the First Crusade, about a century earlier, the Empire had been broken by the campaign of Manzikert; so that the lively pictures of the First Crusade by Scott and Gibbon present us with the State in an age of decadence.[10] The epoch when Byzantine was in the van of civilisation, civil, military and intellectual, stretches from the reign of Justinian (527) to the death of Constantine VIII. (1028), a period of exactly five centuries—more than the whole period of the Roman Republic.

During those five centuries there were a series of alternate periods of splendour, decline, revival, expansion, and final dissolution. The rulers differ from each other as widely as Trajan differs from Nero or Honorius; the times differ as widely as the age of Augustus differs from the ages of Cato or of Theodoric. There were ages of marvellous recovery under Justinian, again under Heraclius, again under Leo the Isaurian, then under Basil of Macedon, next under Nicephorus Phocas, and lastly under Basil II., the slayer of the Bulgarians. There were ages of decay and confusion under the successors of Heraclius, and under those of Irene, and again those of Constantine VIII. But the period to which I desire to fix attention is that from the rise of the Isaurian dynasty (717) to the death of Basil II. (1025), rather

more than three centuries. During the eighth, ninth, and tenth centuries the Roman Empire on the Bosporus was far the most stable and cultured power in the world, and on its existence hung the future of civilisation.

Its power was due to this—that for some five centuries of the early Middle Ages which form the transition from polytheism to feudalism, the main inheritance of civilisation, practical and intellectual, was kept in continuous and undisturbed vitality in the empire centred round the Propontis—that during all this epoch, elsewhere one of continual subdivision and confusion, the southern and eastern coast of Italy, Greece and its islands, Thrace, Macedonia, and Asia Minor as far as the Upper Euphrates, were practically safe and peaceful. This great tract, then the most populous, industrious, and civilised of the world, was able to give itself to wealth, art, and thought, whilst East and West were swept with wars of barbarous invaders. The administration of the Empire, its military and civil organisation, remained continuous and effective in the same seat, under the same law, language, and religion, during the whole period; and the official system worked under all changes of dynasty as a single organic machine. It was thus able to accumulate enormous resources of money and material, and to equip and discipline great regular armies from the martial races of its complex realm, such as were wholly beyond the means of the transitory and ever shifting kingdoms in the rest of Europe and Asia.[11]

Western Europe, no doubt, bore within its bosom the seeds of a far greater world to come, a more virile youth, greater heroes and chiefs. But wealth, organisation, knowledge, for the time were safeguarded behind the walls of Byzantium—to speak roughly, from the

age of Justinian to that of the Crusades. Not only did the empire of New Rome possess the wealth, industry, and knowledge, but it had almost exclusive control of Mediterranean commerce, undisputed supremacy of the seas, paramount financial power, and the monopoly of all the more refined manufactures and arts. In the middle of the tenth century, the contrast between the kingdom of Otto the Great and the empire of Constantine Porphyrogenitus was as great as that between Russia under Peter the Great and France in the days of the Orleans Regency.[12]

From the seventh to the thirteenth century Constantinople was far the largest, wealthiest, most splendid city in Europe. It was in every sense a new Rome. And, if it were at all inferior as a whole to what its mother was in the palmy age of Trajan and Hadrian, it far surpassed the old Rome in its exquisite situation, in its mighty fortifications, and in the beauty of its central palace and church.[13] A long succession of poets and topographers have recounted the glories of the great city—its churches, palaces, baths, forum, hippodrome, columns, porticoes, statues, theatres, hospitals, reservoirs, aqueducts, monasteries, and cemeteries.[14] All accounts of early travellers from the West relate with wonder the splendour and wealth of the imperial city. "These riches and buildings were equalled nowhere in the world," says the Jew Benjamin of Tudela in the twelfth century. "Over all the land there are burghs, castles, and country towns, the one upon the other without interval," says the Saga of King Sigurd, fifty years earlier. The Crusaders, who despised the Greeks of the now decayed empire, were awed at the sight of their city; and as the pirates of the Fifth Crusade sailed up the Propontis they began to wonder at their own temerity in attacking so vast a fortress.[15]

The dominant note of all observers who reached Constantinople from the North or the West, at least down to the eleventh century, even when they most despised the effeminacy and servility of its Greek inhabitants, was this: they felt themselves in presence of a civilisation more complex and organised than any extant. It was akin to the awe felt by Goths and Franks when they first fell under the spell of Rome. At the close of the sixth century, as Dr. Hodgkin notes of Childebert's fourth invasion of Italy, "mighty were a few courteous words from the great Roman Emperor to the barbarian king"—the king whom Maurice the "Imperator semper Augustus" condescends to address as "vir gloriosus."[16] And this idea that New Rome was the centre of the civilised world, that Western sovereigns were not their equals, lasted down to the age of Charles. When the Caroline Empire was decaying and convulsed, the same idea took fresh force. And the sense that the Byzantine world had a fullness and a culture which they had not, persisted until the Crusades effectually broke the spell.[17]

This sentiment was based on two very real facts. The first was that New Rome prolonged no little of the tradition, civil and military organisation, wealth, art, and literature of the older Rome, indeed far more than remained west of the Adriatic. The second, the more important, and the only one on which I now desire to enlarge, was that, in many essentials of civilisation, it was more modern than the nascent nations of the West. Throughout the early centuries of the Middle Ages—we may say from the age of Justinian to that of Hildebrand—the empire on the Bosporus perfected an administrative service, a hierarchy of dignities and offices, a monetary and fiscal system, a code of diplomatic formulas, a scientific body

of civil law, an imperial fleet, engines of war, fortifications, and resources of maritime mobilisation, such as were not to be seen in Western kingdoms till the close of the Middle Ages, and which were gradually adopted or imitated in the West. At a time when Charles, or Capet, or Otto were welding into order their rude peoples, the traveller who reached the Bosporus found most of the institutions and habits of life such as we associate with the great cities of much later epochs. He would find a regular city police, organised bodies of municipal workmen, public parks, hospitals, orphanages, schools of law, science, and medicine, theatrical and spectacular amusements, immense factories, sumptuous palaces, and a life which recalls the Cinque Cento in Italy.[18]

It is quite true that this imperial administration was despotic, that much of the art was lifeless and all the literature jejune; that cruelty, vice, corruption, and superstition were flagrant and constant, just as the European Renascence had cruelty, vice, and corruption, at the very heart of its culture. The older historians are too fond of comparing the Leos and Constantines with the Scipios and the Antonines, instead of comparing them with the Lombard, Frank, or Bulgarian chiefs of their own times. And we are all too much given to judge the Byzantines of the eighth, ninth, and tenth centuries by the moral standards of our own age; to denounce their pompous ceremonials, their servile etiquette, their frigid compositions, and their savage executions. We forget that for many centuries Western chiefs vied with each other in copying and parading the external paraphernalia of the Roman emperors in their Byzantine ceremonial: their crowns, sceptres, coins, titles, palaces, international usages, golden bulls, pragmatic sanctions, and court officialdom. There is hardly a single

symbol or form or office dear to the monarchies and aristocracies of Europe of which the original model was not elaborated in the Sacred Palace beside the Golden Horn. And most of these symbols and offices are still amongst the most venerable insignia to-day at the State functions of Tsar, Kaiser, Pope, and King.[19]

The cohesive force of the Byzantine monarchy resided in its elaborate administration, civil and military. It formed a colossal bureaucracy centred round the sacred person of the Sovereign Lord of so many races, such diverse provinces, such populous towns, united by nothing but one supreme tie of allegiance. No doubt it was semi-Oriental, it was absolutist, it was oppressive, it was theocratic. But for some seven centuries it held together a vast and thriving empire, and for four centuries more it kept in being the image and memory of empire. And with all its evils and tyranny, it was closely copied by every bureaucratic absolutism in modern Europe. And even to-day the *chinovnik* of Russia, the *Beamten* of Prussia, and the *administration* of France trace their offices and even their titles to the types of the Byzantine official hierarchy.

Much more is this true of ceremonial, titles, and places of dignity. We may say that the entire nomenclature of monarchic courts and honours is derived direct from Byzantine originals, ever since Clovis was proud to call himself *Consul* and *Augustus*, and to receive a diadem from Anastasius, and ever since Charles accepted the style of Emperor and Augustus, pacific, crowned of God in the Basilica of S. Peter on Christmas Day, 800 ; when the Roman people shouted "Life and Victory," just as the Byzantines used to do.[20] When in the tenth century our Edward the elder was styled *Rex invictissimus* and Athelstan called

himself *Basileus of the English*, they simply borrowed the Greek formulas of supreme rank. We are amused and bewildered, as we read Constantine the seventh on the *Ceremonies of the Court*, by the endless succession of officials, obeisances, compliments, gesticulations, and robings which he so solemnly describes: with his great chamberlain, his high steward, his chief butler, his privy seal, his gold stick, his master of the horse, lords and ladies in waiting, right honourables, ushers, grooms, and gentlemen of the guard. But we usually forget that the Bourbons, the Hapsburgs, Hohenzollerns, and Romanoffs have maintained these very forms and dignities for centuries. Indeed, it might be amusing to take the Purple King's *βασίλειος τάξις* to a court drawing-room, and check off the offices and forms which still survive after a thousand years. Michael Psellos, in the eleventh century, speaks of his *ἥλιος βασιλεύς*—the exact equivalent of Louis's *Roi-Soleil*. The officialdom and ceremonial of Byzantium was rotten and absurd enough; but it is not for the courtiers of Europe to scoff at it. It was an anticipation by many centuries of much that we still call civilisation.

And it would be quite wrong to assume that the organisation of the Empire was a rigid and unchanging system. On the contrary, it steadily developed and was recast according to the necessities of the case. In the main, these necessities were the shrinkage of the boundaries, the loss of rich provinces, and, above all, the pressure of Oriental invaders together with the growth of the western kingdoms and empire. Nor was there anything casual or arbitrary in these changes. The process of Orientation and of Autocracy which Aurelian and Diocletian had begun in the third century had been developed into a system by Constantine when he planted the Empire on the

Bosporus and founded an administrative and social hierarchy in the fourth century. Justinian in the sixth century introduced changes which gave the empire a more military and more centralised form to meet the enemies by which it was surrounded. Heraclius and his dynasty in the seventh century carried this process still further under the tremendous strain to which their rule was exposed. They instituted the system of *Themes*, military governorships under a general having plenary authority both in peace and war; and the system of *Themes* was developed, in the eighth and ninth century, until in the tenth they are classified by Constantine Porphyrogenitus, who mentions about thirty. During the whole period, from the seventh to the eleventh centuries inclusive, the organisation was continually developed or varied, not violently or improvidently, but to meet the needs of the time. There is reason to believe these developments to have been systematic, continuous, and judicious. If we compare them with the convulsions, anarchy, racial and political revolutions which shook Western Europe during the same epoch, we cannot deny that the tyrannies and formalities of the Byzantine Court were compatible with high aptitude for Imperial government, order, and defence.[21] Alone amongst the nations of the world, the Empire maintained a systematic finance and exchequer, a pure standard coinage, and a regular commercial marine.

For the historian, the point of interest in this Byzantine administration is that, with all its crimes and pomposities, it was systematic and continuous. It never suffered the administrative and financial chaos which afflicted the West in the fifth century, or in the ninth century after the decay of the Carlings, and so on down to the revival of the Holy Roman Empire by Otto the Great. It is difficult to overrate the

ultimate importance of the acceptance by Charles of the title of Emperor, or of its revival by Otto; and history has taken a new life since the modern school has worked out all that these meant to the West. But we must be careful not to fall into the opposite pitfall, as if the Roman Empire had been *translated* back again to the West, as some clerical enthusiasts pretended, as if the Empire of Charles was a continuous and growing organism from the time of Charles down to Rudolph of Hapsburg, or as if the coronation of Charles or of Otto at Rome broke the continuity of Empire at the Bosporus, or even greatly diminished its authority and prestige. On the contrary, these Western ceremonies affected it only for a season, and from time to time, and affected its temper more than its power.

The Western Empire, in spite of the strong men who at times wielded its sceptre, and whatever the fitful bursts of force it displayed, was long before it quite recognised its own dignity and might; it was very vaguely and variously understood at first by its composite parts; and for the earlier centuries was a loose, troubled, and migratory symbol of rank rather than a fixed and recognised system of government. All this time the Emperors in the vermilion buskins were regularly crowned in the Holy Wisdom; they all worshipped there, and all lived and ruled under its shadow. Their palaces by the Bosporus maintained, under every dynasty and through every century, the same vast bureaucratic machine, and organised from the same centre the same armies and fleets; they supported the same churches, libraries, monasteries, schools, and spectacles, without the break of a day, however much Muslim invaders plundered or occupied their Asiatic provinces, and although the rulers of Franks or Saxons defied their authority or borrowed

their titles. The Empire of Franks and Teutons was not a systematic government and had no local seat. That of the Greeks, as they were called, had all the characters of a fixed capital and of a continuous State system.

There is nothing in all history more astonishing and more worthy of study than the continual rallies of this Roman Empire. There is an alternate ebb and flow in the extent and power of the Empire most fascinating to observe. The wonderful revival under Justinian, and again that under Heraclius in the sixth and seventh centuries, are familiar enough even to the general reader, as well as the troubles which supervened under their respective successors. The more splendid and more permanent rally under the Isaurian dynasty and again under the Basilian dynasty, the whole period from 717 for three centuries, to the last of the Basilian Emperors, in 1028, is less familiar to English readers, and yet is rich with incidents as well as lessons. The anarchy which followed the fall of the miserable tyrant Justinian II. seemed certain to ruin the whole Empire. From this fate it was saved by the Isaurian (or Syrian), Leo III. and his descendants and successors; and again order and empire were saved by Basil I. of Macedon and his descendants, who ruled for 160 years. The onward sweep of the conquering Muslims had roused the whole Empire to defend its existence. And all through the eighth, ninth, and tenth centuries it found a succession of statesmen and warriors from Asia Minor and Thrace whose policy and exploits at least equal any recorded in the same age either in the East or the West. And it is to be noted that these two glorious periods of the Byzantine power coincided with the great revival of the Franks under Pippin and his dynasty, and that of the Saxons under Henry the Fowler and the dynasty of the Ottos.

Nothing could have saved the Empire but its superiority in war—at least in defence. And this superiority it possessed from the sixth to the eleventh century. It was a stange error of the older historians, into which Gibbon himself fell, that the Byzantine armies were wanting in courage, discipline, and organisation. On the contrary, during all the early Middle Ages they were the only really scientific army in the world. They revolutionised the art of war, both in theory and practice, and in some points brought it to a stage which was only reached in quite modern times, as for instance in mobilisation and in providing ambulance corps. They quite recast the old Roman methods and armies, whilst retaining the discipline, spirit, and thoroughness of Rome. The great changes were four-fold: (1) they made it as of old a native army of Roman subjects, not of foreign allies or mercenaries; (2) they made its main force cavalry, in lieu of infantry; (3) they changed the weapons to bow and lance instead of sword and javelin—and greatly developed body armour; (4) they substituted a composite and flexible army-corps for the old legion. Men of all races were enlisted, save Greeks and Latins. The main strength came from the races of the highlands of Anatolia and Armenia—the races which defended Plevna.

When, towards the close of the fourth century, the battle of Adrianople rang the knell of Roman infantry, the Byzantine warriors organised an army of mounted bowmen. Belisarius and Narses won their victories with ἱπποτοξόται. The cataphracti, or mail-clad horsemen, armed with bow, broadsword, and lance, who formed nearly half the Byzantine armies, were immensely superior both in mobility, in range, and in force to any troops of old Rome, and they were more than a match for any similar troopers that Asia or

Europe could put into the field. From the sixth to the tenth centuries we have still extant scientific treatises on the art of war under the names of Maurice, Leo, and Nicephorus. When to this we take into account the massive system of fortification developed at Constantinople, the various forms of Greek fire, their engines to project combustible liquids, and one form that seems the basis of gunpowder, and last of all the command of the sea, and a powerful service of transports and ships of war, we need not doubt Mr. Oman's conclusion that the Byzantine Empire had the most efficient forces then extant, nor need we wonder how it was that for eight centuries it kept at bay such a host of dangerous foes.[22]

The sea-power of the Empire came later, for the control of the Mediterranean was not challenged until the Saracens took to the sea. But from the seventh to the eleventh centuries (and mainly in the ninth and tenth) the Empire developed a powerful marine of war galleys, cruisers, and transports. The war galleys or *dromonds*, with two banks of oars, carried 300 men each, the cruisers 100, and many of them were fitted with fighting-towers and machines for hurling explosives and liquid combustibles. Hand-grenades, and apparently guns whence gunpowder shot forth fire-balls but not bullets, were their armament. When Nicephorus Phocas recovered Crete from the Saracens, we are told that his expedition numbered 3300 ships of war and transports, and carried infantry, bowmen, and cavalry, a siege-train, and engines, in all amounting to 40,000 or 50,000 men.[23] Nothing in the tenth century could rival such a sea-power. He might fairly boast as Emperor to the envoy of Otto that he could lay any coast town of Italy in ashes. Such was the maritime ascendancy of Byzantium, until it passed in the eleventh century to the Italian republics.[24]

The most signal evidence of the superior civilisation of Byzantium down to the tenth century is found in the fact that alone of all states it maintained a continuous, scientific, and even progressive system of law. Whilst the *Corpus Juris* died down in the West under the successive invasions of the Northern nations, at least so far as governments and official study was concerned, it continued under the Emperors in the East to be the law of the State, to be expounded in translations, commentaries, and handbooks, to be regularly taught in schools of law, and still more to be developed in a Christian and modern sense.[25] It was the brilliant proof of Savigny that Roman law was never utterly extinct in Europe, and then rediscovered in the twelfth century. As he showed, it lingered on without official recognition among Latin subject races in a casual way, until what Savigny himself calls the Revival of the Civil Law at Bologna in the twelfth century.[26] But for official and practical purposes, the *Corpus Juris* of Justinian was superseded for six centuries by the various laws of the Teutonic conquerors. These laws, whatever their interest, were rude prescriptions to serve the time, without order, method, or permanence, the sure evidence of a low civilisation—as Paulus Diaconus said *tempora fuere barbarica*. If we take the Code of Rothari the Lombard, in the seventh century, or the Capitularies of the Carolines, or Saxon Dooms, or the *Liber Papiensis* of the eleventh century, civil law in any systematic sense was unknown in Western Europe, and the *Corpus Juris* was obsolete.[27]

Now, there was no revival of Roman Law in Byzantium, because there it never was extinct. Justinian's later legislation was promulgated in Greek, and his *Corpus Juris* was at once translated, summarised, and abridged in the East. Although schools of law

existed in Constantinople and elsewhere, the seventh century, in its disasters and confusion, let the civil law fall to a low ebb. But the Isaurian dynasty, in the age of the Frank King Pippin, made efforts to restore and to develop the law. The *Ecloga* of Leo III. and Constantine V. was promulgated to revise the law of persons in a Christian sense. It was part of the attempt of the Iconoclasts to form a moral reform in a Puritan spirit. This was followed by three special codes—(1) A maritime code, of the Rhodian law, as to loss at sea and commercial risks; (2) a military code or law martial; (3) a rural code to regulate the police of country populations. And a register of births for males was instituted throughout the Empire at the same time.

In the ninth century the Basilian dynasty issued a new legislation which, whilst professing to restore the *Corpus Juris* of Justinian, practically accepted much of the moral reforms of the Isaurians. The *Procheiron* was a manual designed to give a general knowledge of the entire *Corpus Juris* of Justinian. It was followed by the *Epanagoge*, a revision of the *Procheiron*. We have other institutional works and a *Peira* or manual of practice, or the application of law to life. But the great work of the Basilian dynasty was the *Basilica*, in sixty books, of Basil I. and Leo VI., the Philosopher, about 890, an epoch that Mr. Bryce justly calls "the nadir of order and civilisation" in the West, at the time when the Carolines ended with Charles the Fat and Lewis the Child. The *Basilica*, which fill six quarto volumes, stood on a par with the *Corpus Juris* of Justinian. It was a systematic attempt to compile a complete code of law, based on the Roman law, but largely reforming it from the influences of Christianity, humanity, and the advancing habits of a new society.

We thus have in Greek a new *Corpus Juris*, a

long series of institutions, amendments, text-books, scholiasts, and glosses, down to the foundation at Constantinople of a new school of law by Constantine Monomachus in the middle of the eleventh century, so that the continuity of civil law from Tribonian to Theophilus the Younger is complete. As Mr. Roby has pointed out (Int. p. cclii), these Greek translations and comments are of great value in determining the texts of the Latin originals. The *Basilica*, indeed, was as permanent as the *Corpus Juris*, and has formed the basis of civil law to the Christian communities of the East, as it is to this day of the Greeks. Nor is it worthy of attention only for its continuity and its permanence. It is a real advance on the old law of Rome from a Christian and modern sense. The *Basilica* opens with a fine proem, which is an admirable and just criticism of the *Corpus Juris*. "Justinian," says Basil, "had four codes. We combine the whole law in *one*. We omit and amend as we go on, and have collected the whole in sixty books."[28] The influence of Christianity and its effect on personal law was feeble enough in the code of Justinian. The Isaurian and Basilian laws are deeply marked by the great change. They proclaim the principle and work it out to its conclusions—that "there is no half measure between marriage and celibacy." Concubinage disappears and immoral unions become penal. The marriage of slaves is gradually recognised, and the public evidence of marriage is steadily defined. The law of divorce is put very much on the basis of our existing conditions. The wife is gradually raised to equality of rights. She becomes the guardian of her children; women can legally adopt; there can be no tutelage of minors during the life of *either* parent. The property of husband and wife is placed under just conditions, the *patria potestas* is abolished in the

old Roman sense, and the succession on death of either spouse is subject to new regulations. The cumbrous number of witnesses to a testament is reduced; the old formal distinctions between personal and real property are abolished, and a scheme of liquidated damages is introduced. There is no feudal system of any kind. There is a systematic effort to protect the peasant from the δυνατοί, to give the cultivator "fixity of tenure."

Here, then, we have proof that the grand scheme of Roman law, which was officially ignored and forgotten in the whole West for six centuries, was continuously studied, taught, and developed by Byzantines without a single interruption, until it was moulded by Christian morality and modern sentiment to approach the form in which the civil law is now in use in Europe. No higher evidence could be found to show that civilisation, morality, and learning were carried on for those troubled times in the Greek world with a vigour and a continuity that have no counterpart in Latin and Teutonic Europe. Strangely enough, this striking fact was ignored till lately by civilians, and is still ignored by our English jurists. The learning on the Græco-Roman law between Justinian and the school of Bologna is entirely confined to foreign scholars; and I have not noticed anything but brief incidental notices of their labours in the works of any English lawyer. It is a virgin soil that lies open to the plough of any inquiring student of law.

Turn to the history of Art. Here, again, it must be said that from the fifth to the eleventh century the Byzantine and Eastern world preserved the traditions, and led the development of art in all its modes. We are now free of the ancient fallacy that Art was drowned beneath the waves of the Teutonic invaders, until many centuries later it slowly came to life in

Italy and then north of the Alps. The truth is that the noblest and most essential of the arts—that of building—some of the minor arts of decoration and ornament, and the art of music, down to the invention of Guido of Arezzo in the eleventh century, lived on and made new departures, whilst most of the arts of form died down under the combined forces of barbarian convulsions and religious asceticism. And it was Byzantium which was the centre of the new architecture and the new decoration, whilst it kept alive such seeds of the arts of form as could be saved through the rudeness and the fanaticism of the early Middle Ages. To the age of Justinian we owe one of the greatest steps ever taken by man in the art of building. The great Church of the Holy Wisdom exerted over architecture a wider influence than can be positively claimed for any single edifice in the history of the arts. We trace enormous ramifications of its example in the whole East and the whole of the West, at Ravenna, Kief, Venice, Aachen, Palermo, Thessalonica, Cairo, Syria, Persia, and Delhi. And with all the enthusiasm we must feel for the Parthenon and the Pantheon, for Amiens and Chartres, I must profess my personal conviction that the interior of Agia Sophia is the grandest in the world, and certainly that one which offers the soundest basis for the architecture of the future.[29]

The great impulse given to all subsequent building by Anthemius and Isodorus lay in the perfect combination of the dome on the grandest scale with massive tiers of arches rising from colossal columns—the union of unrivalled engineering skill with exquisite ornament, the whole being a masterpiece of subtlety, sublimity, harmony, and reserve. It is true that the Pantheon, which we now know to be of the age of Hadrian, not of Augustus, and the vast *caldaria* of

the Thermæ, had given the earliest type of the true dome.[80] It is true that the wonderful artifice of crowning the column with the arch in lieu of architrave was invented some centuries earlier. But the union of dome, on the grandest scale and in infinite variety, with arched ranges of columns in rows and in tiers —this was the unique triumph of Byzantine art, and nothing in the history of building has borne a fruit so rich. Ravenna, Torcello, St. Mark's, and Monreale are copies of Byzantine churches. Aachen, as Freeman recognises, is a direct copy of Ravenna, from whence Charles obtained ornaments for his palace chapel. And on both sides of the Rhine were constant copies from the city of the great Charles. It is quite true that French, Rhenish, Russian, Moorish, and Saracen architects developed, and in their façades, towers, and exteriors, much improved on the Byzantine type, which, except in Italy, was not directly copied. But the type, the original conception, was in all cases derived from the Bosporus.

Without entering on the vexed problem of the mode and extent of the direct imitation of Byzantine architecture either in the East or the West, we must conclude, if we carefully examine the buildings in Greece and the Levant, in Armenia and Syria, and on the shores of Italy, that the Bosporus became the *nidus* of a building art which had a profound influence on Asia and Europe from the sixth to the twelfth centuries. And when justice is done to its constructive science, to its versatility, and at the same time to its severe taste and dignity, this Byzantine type is one of the most masculine and generative forms of art ever produced by human genius. The Holy Wisdom is twice the age of the Gothic cathedrals, and it will long outlive them. In beauty of material it far surpasses them, and if it has been outvied in

mass by the mighty temples of the Renascence, it far exceeds these in richness, in subtlety, and in refinement.[31]

The people who evolved a noble and creative type of architecture could not be dead to art. But even in the arts of form we rate the Byzantines too low. From the sixth to the eleventh century Western Europe drew from Byzantium its type of ornament in every kind. This was often indirectly and perhaps unconsciously done, and usually with great modifications. But all careful study of the mosaics, the metal work, the ivories, the embroideries, the carvings, the coins, the paintings, and the manuscripts of these ages establishes the priority and the originality of the Byzantine arts of decoration.[32] It is undoubted that the art of mosaic ornament had its source there. Mosaic, with its Greek name, was introduced into the ancient world from the East by Greece. But the exquisite art of wall decoration by glass mosaic which we are now reviving was a strictly Byzantine art, and from the fifth to the twelfth century was carried into Europe by the direct assistance of the Byzantine school. The rigid conservatism of the Church, and the gradual decline of taste, stereotyped and at last destroyed the art; but there still exist in Constantinople and in Greece glass mosaic figures as grand as anything in the decorative art of any age.[33]

In the end superstition and immobility more or less stifled the growth of all the minor arts at Byzantium, as confusion and barbarism submerged them in the West. What remnants remained between the age of Justinian and the age of the Normans were nursed beside the Bosporus. The art of carving ivory certainly survived, and in the plaques and caskets which are spared we can trace from time to time a skill which, if it have wholly degenerated from

Græco-Roman art, was superior to any we can discover in the West till the rise of the Pisan school. The noble Angel of our own museum, the Veroli casket of South Kensington, and some plaques, diptychs, oliphants, vases, and book-covers, remain to prove that all through these early times Byzantine decoration dominated in Europe, and occasionally could produce a piece which seemed to anticipate good Gothic and Renascence work.[34]

It is the same in the art of illuminating manuscripts. Painting, no doubt, declined more rapidly than any other art under the combined forces of barbarism and the gospel. But from the fifth to the eleventh century the paintings in Greek manuscripts are far superior to those of Western Europe. The Irish and Caroline schools developed a style of fine calligraphy and ingenious borders and initials. But their figures are curiously inferior to those of the Byzantine painters, who evidently kept their borderings subdued so as not to interfere with their figures. Conservatism and superstition smothered and eventually killed the art of painting, as it did the art of sculpture, in the East. But there are a few rare manuscripts in Venice, the Vatican, and the French Bibliothèque Nationale—all certainly executed for Basil I., Nicephorus, and Basil II. in the ninth and tenth centuries —which in drawing, even of the nude, in composition, in expression, in grandeur of colour and effect, are not equalled until we reach the fourteenth century in Europe. The Vatican, the Venice, and the Paris examples, in my opinion, have never been surpassed.[35]

The manufacture of silks and embroidered satins was almost a Greek monopoly all through the Middle Ages. Mediæval literature is full of the splendid silks of Constantinople, of the robes and exquisite brocades which kings and princes were eager to obtain. We

hear of the robe of a Greek senator which had 600 figures picturing the entire life of Christ. Costly stuffs and utensils bore Greek names and lettering down to the middle of the fifteenth century. *Samite* is Greek for six-threaded stuff. Cendal is σινδών, a kind of muslin or taffetas. And some exquisite fragments of embroidered robes of Greek work are preserved in the Vatican and many Northern museums and sacristies. The diadems, sceptres, thrones, robes, coins, and jewels of the early Mediæval princes were all Greek in type, and usually Byzantine in origin. So that Mr. Frothingham, in the *American Journal of Archæology* (1894), does not hesitate to write: "The debt to Byzantium is undoubtedly immense; the difficulty consists in ascertaining what amount of originality can properly be claimed for the Western arts, industries, and institutions during the early Middle Ages." [86]

We err also if we have nothing but contempt for the Byzantine intellectual movement in the early Middle Ages. It is disparaged for two reasons—first, that we do not take account of the only period when it was invaluable, from the eighth to the eleventh centuries; and, secondly, because the Greek in which it was expressed falls off so cruelly from the classical tongue we love. But review the priceless services of this semi-barbarous literature when literature was dormant in the West. How much poetry, philosophy, or science was there in Western Europe between Gregory the Great and Lanfranc? A few ballads, annals, and homilies of merit, but quite limited to their narrow localities. For the preservation of the language, literature, philosophy, and science of Greece mankind were dependent on the Roman Empire in the East, until the Saracens and Persians received and transmitted the inheritance.

From the time of Proclus in the fifth century, there had never been wanting a succession of students of the philosophers of Greece; and it is certain that for some centuries the books and the tradition of Plato and Aristotle were preserved to the world in the schools of Alexandria, Athens, and then of Byzantium. Of the study and development of the civil law we have already spoken. And the same succession was maintained in physical science. Both geometry and astronomy were kept alive, though not advanced. The immortal architects of the *Holy Wisdom* were scientific mathematicians, and wrote works on Mechanics. The mathematician Leo, in the middle of the ninth century, lectured on Geometry in the Church of the Forty Martyrs at Constantinople, and he wrote an essay on Euclid, when there was little demand for science in the West, in the age of Lewis the Pious and the descendants of Ecgbert. In the tenth century we have an essay dealing with a treatise of Hero on practical geometry. And Michael Psellus in the eleventh century, the "Prince of Philosophers," wrote, amongst other things, on mathematics and astronomy. From the fourth to the eleventh century we have a regular series of writers on medicine, and systematic treatises on the healing art.

On other physical sciences — Zoology, Botany, Mineralogy, and Geography—a series of Greek writers and treatises are recorded which partly survive in text or in summaries. I need hardly add that I do not pretend to have studied these works, nor do I suppose that they are worth study, or of any present value whatever. I am relying on the learned historian of Byzantine literature, Krumbacher, who has devoted 1200 pages of close print to these middle Greek authors, and on other biographical and literary histories. The point of interest to the historian is not the

absolute value of these forgotten books. It is the fact that down to the age of the Crusades a real, even if feeble, sequence of thinkers was maintained in the Eastern Empire to keep alive the thought and knowledge of the ancient world whilst the Western nations were submerged in revolution and struggles of life or death. Our tendency is to confine to too special and definite an era the influence of Greek on European thought, if we limit it to what is called the Renascence after the capture of Constantinople by the Turks. In truth, from the fifth century to the fifteenth there was a gradual Renascence, or rather an infiltration of ideas, knowledge, and art, from the Grecised Empire into Western Europe. It was never quite inactive, and was fitful and irregular, but in a real way continuous. Its effect was concealed and misrepresented by national antipathies, commercial rivalries, and the bitter jealousies of the two Empires and the two Churches. The main occasions of this infiltration from East to West were undoubtedly—first, the Iconoclast persecutions, then the Crusades, and finally the capture of the City by Mohammed the Conqueror. The movement, which we call the Renascence, may have been the more important of the three, but we must not ignore the real effect of the other two, nor the constant influence of a more advanced and more settled civilisation upon a civilisation which was passing out of barbarism through convulsions into order and life.[37]

The peculiar, indispensable service of Byzantine literature was the preservation of the language, philology, and archæology of Greece. It is impossible to see how our knowledge of ancient literature or civilisation could have been recovered if Constantinople had not nursed through the early Middle Ages the vast accumulations of Greek learning in the schools of

Alexandria, Athens, and Asia Minor; if Photius, Suidas, Eustathius, Tzetzes, and the Scholiasts had not poured out their lexicons, anecdotes, and commentaries; if the *Corpus Scriptorum historiae Byzantinae* had never been compiled; if indefatigable copyists had not toiled in multiplying the texts of ancient Greece. Pedantic, dull, blundering as they are too often, they are indispensable. We pick precious truths and knowledge out of their garrulities and stupidities, for they preserve what otherwise would have been lost for ever. It is no paradox that their very merit to us is that they were never either original or brilliant. Their genius, indeed, would have been our loss. Dunces and pedants as they were, they servilely repeated the words of the immortals. Had they not done so, the immortals would have died long ago.[38]

Of the vast product of the theology of the East it is impossible here to speak. As in the West, and even more than in the West, the intellect of the age was absorbed in spiritual problems and divine mysteries. The amount of its intellectual energy and its moral enthusiasm was as great in the East as in the West; and if the general result is so inferior, the reason is to be found not in less subtlety or industry in the Greek-speaking divines, but rather in the lower social conditions and the rigid absolutism under which they worked. From the first, the Greek Church was half Oriental, profoundly mystical and metaphysical. But we must never depreciate that Orthodox Church which had its Chrysostom, its Cyril and Methodius, the Patriarch Photius, and Gregory of Nazianzus, with crowds of preachers, martyrs, and saints; which, in any case, was the elder brother, guide, and teacher for ages of the Church Catholic; which avoided some of the worst errors, most furious conflicts, the grossest scandals of the Papacy; and which brought within its

fold those vast peoples of Eastern Europe which the Roman communion failed to reach.[39]

The Greek Church, which never attained the centralisation of the Church of Rome, was spared some of those sources of despotism and corruption which ultimately tore the Western Church in twain. And, if it never became so potent a spiritual force as was Rome at its highest, in the Greek Church permanent conflict with the Empire and struggles for temporal dominion were unknown. The Greek Church, however, had its own desperate convulsions in the long and fierce battle between Iconoclasts and Iconodules. It would be a fatal error to undervalue this great and significant schism as if it were a mere affair of the use of images in worship. Iconoclasm was one of the great religious movements in the world's history—akin to Arianism, to the Albigensian heresies of the thirteenth century, akin to Mahometanism, akin to Lutheranism, akin to some forms of Puritanism, though quite distinct from all of these. It was evidently a bold and enthusiastic effort of Asiatic Christians to free the European Christians of the common Empire from the fetichism, idol-worship, and monkery in which their life was being stifled.

The Isaurian chiefs had the support of the great magnates of Asia Minor, of the mountaineers of Anatolia, and the bulk of the hardy veterans of the camp. Their zeal to force on a superstitious populace and on swarms of endowed orders of ecclesiastics a moral and spiritual reformation towards a simpler and more abstract Theism—to purge Christianity, in fact, of its grosser anthropomorphism—this is one of the most interesting problems in all history. And all the more that it was a moral and spiritual reform attempted, not by poor zealots from the depths of the popular conscience, but by absolute sovereigns and unflinching

governments, which united something of the creed of the Waldenses to the cruel passions of Simon de Montfort. The movement showed how ready was the Asiatic portion of the Empire to accept some form of Islam ; and we can well conceive how it came that Leo III. was called σαρακηνόφρων, "imbued with the temperament of an Arab." The whole story has been shamelessly perverted by religious bigotry, and we know little of Iconoclasm, except in the satires of their enemies the Iconodules. One of the greatest rulers of the Empire has been stamped with a disgusting nickname, and it is difficult now to discover what is the truth about the entire dynasty and movement. Mr. Bury has given us some admirable chapters on this remarkable reformation of faith and manners. But we need a full history of a very obscure and obstinate conflict which for a century and a half shook the Empire to its foundations, severed the Orthodox Church from the Church Catholic, and yet greatly stimulated the intercourse of ideas and arts between the East and the West.[40]

In pleading for a more systematic study of Byzantine history and civilisation in the early Middle Ages, I am far from pretending that it can enter into rivalry with that of Western Europe. I do not doubt that it was a lower type ; that neither in State nor in Church, neither in policy nor in arms, in morals, in literature, or in art, did it in the sum equal or even approach the Catholic Feudalism of the West. And assuredly, as the West from the time of Charles and Otto onwards rose into modern life, Eastern Christendom sank slowly down into decay and ruin. My point is simply that this Byzantine history and civilisation have been unduly depreciated and unfairly neglected. And this is especially true of English scholars, who have done little indeed of late in a field

wherein foreign scholars have done much. It is a field where much remains to be done in order to redress the prejudices and the ignorance of ages, multiplied from of old by clerical bigotry, race insolence, and the unscrupulous avarice of trade. Hardly any other field of history has been so widely distorted and so ignorantly disparaged.

Let me also add that it is for a quite limited period in the thousand years of Byzantine history that I find its peculiar importance. The Justinian and Heraclian periods have brilliant episodes and some great men. But the truly fertile period of Byzantine history, in its contrast with and reaction upon the West, lies in the period from the rise of the Isaurian to the close of the Basilian dynasty—roughly speaking, for the eighth, ninth, tenth, and first half of the eleventh centuries. The Isaurian dynasty undoubtedly opened a new era in the Empire; and in some respects the Basilian dynasty did the same. If we limit our field further, we might take the Macedonian period, where our authorities are fuller, from the accession of Basil I. to the death of Basil II. This century and a half may fairly be compared with the same epoch in the East or in the West. By the middle of the eleventh century, when the Basilian dynasty ended, great changes were setting in, both in the East and the West. The rise of the Seljuks and of the Normans, the growth of Italian commerce, the decay of the Eastern Empire, the struggles of the Papacy and the Western Empire, and finally the Crusades, introduce a new World. It is the point at which Byzantine history loses all its special value for the problems of historical continuity and comparison. And yet it is the point at which a new colour and piquancy is too often given to Byzantine annals.

In the eighth, ninth, and tenth centuries we may

trace a civilisation around the Bosporus which, with all its evils and the seeds of disease within it, was in one sense far older than any other in Europe, in another sense, was far more modern ; which preserved things of priceless value to the human race ; which finally disproved the fallacy that there had ever been any prolonged break in human evolution ; which was the mother and the model of secular churches and mighty kingdoms in Eastern Europe, churches and kingdoms which are still not willing to allow any superiority to the West, either in the region of State organisation or of spiritual faith.[41]

NOTES (Revised, 1912)

[1] FREEMAN, *Historical Essays, third series*, 1879, p. 241.—This essay was a composite embodiment of a series of reviews, beginning with one in 1855 on Finlay's earlier volumes, and incorporating much later matter. It is one of the most eloquent and impressive of all Professor Freeman's writings, and has exercised a deserved influence over English historical thought. It is entitled "The Byzantine Empire," to which name Mr. Bury has shown very valid objections. Mr. Bury's own style, "The Later Roman Empire," served his purpose at first, the period of which is from Arcadius and Honorius to Irene, *i.e.* from A.D. 395 to 802. But it is not adequate as a description of the Empire from the foundation of Constantinople to its capture by the Turks. The only accurate name for this is the "Empire of New Rome," which covers the eleven centuries from the first Constantine to the last. Whilst prejudice remains so strong it may be as well to avoid the term "Byzantine Empire," though Mr. Oman has not hesitated to use it as his title. But it is inevitable to speak of Byzantine history, or art, or civilisation, when we refer to that which had its seat on the Bosporus.

[2] J. B. BURY, *The Later Roman Empire*, vol. i. preface, p. 5.—This masterly work is the most important history of the Eastern Empire from the fifth to the opening of the ninth century that has appeared since Gibbon, and is more full and more modern than the corresponding part of Finlay's work. Mr. Bury has had the great advantage of access to all that has been done in the last fifty years by German, French, Russian, Hungarian, Greek, and Oriental scholars, who have added so greatly to the materials possessed by Gibbon, or even by Finlay. Mr. Bury has published (1912) a further instalment of his history under the title of *The Eastern Roman Empire*—from the fall of Irene to the accession of

Basil I. (A.D. 802-867). It is to be hoped that Mr. Bury will be induced to continue his work at least down to the Crusades. He has already thrown light on the period in his notes and appendices to his edition of Gibbon's *Decline and Fall* (7 vols., Methuen), now happily at last complete. And in the *English Historical Review*, vol. iv. 1889, he has given us a valuable sketch of the eleventh-century emperors. It is unfortunate that, as his work rests at present, Mr. Bury has not treated the Basilian dynasty, A.D. 867-1057, the two centuries when the Empire was at the height of its brilliancy and fame—the period when it was most deserving of study.

[3] GEORGE FINLAY'S *History of Greece from* B.C. 146 *to* A.D. 1864, first begun in 1843, completed by the author and revised by him in 1863, was finally edited by H. F. Tozer, in seven volumes, for the Clarendon Press, 1877. In speaking of this fine work, one must use the hackneyed and misused word that it created an epoch, at least for English readers. But it has to be borne in mind that Byzantine history was not the direct subject of Finlay's labours, and that the Empire of New Rome occupies at most the first three of Finlay's seven volumes, or about one hundred pages to a century. And the parts of Gibbon directly occupied with Constantinople and its rulers form no larger proportion of the whole work. Yet Gibbon and Finlay still remain the only English historians who have treated systematically the continuous story of the eleven centuries from the first Constantine to the last. The general reader may get some notion of this period from Mr. Oman's pleasant summary in the "Story of the Nations" series—*The Byzantine Empire* (Fisher Unwin, 1892).

[4] GIBBON'S *Decline and Fall*, ed. J. B. Bury, vol. v. pp. 169-174 (new edition now preparing). Mr. Bury's edition of Gibbon is quoted in these notes.

[5] Voltaire's famous remark about Byzantine history as "a worthless repertory of declamation and miracles, disgraceful to the human mind," has drawn down the indignation of Finlay, vol. ii. p. 8, and of Bury, vol. i. p. 6. How often, indeed, did Voltaire himself find the same faults in the annals of the West and of Christian Rome! Mr. Lecky would no doubt hardly now write of the "universal verdict of history," what he incidentally dropped out more than thirty years ago in his *History of European Morals*, ii. p. 13.

LEBEAU'S *Histoire du Bas-Empire*, 1756-79, 22 vols., which nobody now reads, has given the Empire of New Rome a label which modern learning has not yet been able to scrape off. It is one of those unlucky books of which nothing survives but the title, and that is a blunder and a libel. Lebeau did for the Roman Empire of the Bosporus what Iconodules did for Constantine V. He gave it an ugly nickname—which sticks.

As to the bitter contests between the theologians of Old and of New Rome, good summaries may be found in Neander's *Church History*, third period, sect. iv. 2, 3 ; fourth period, sect. 2, 3, 4 ; and also in Milman's *Latin Christianity*, vol. ii. bk. iv. ch. 6, 7, 8, 9, 12 ; vol. iii. bk. vii. ch. 6 ; see also Neale, Rev. J. M., *Holy Eastern Church.*

[6] GIBBON'S ch. xlviii. sketches Byzantine history from A.D. 641 to 1185, *i.e.* five centuries (in 70 pp. of the new edition by Bury, vol. v.). In ch. xlix. he treats Iconoclasm ; and in ch. liii. he returns to the tenth century for some general reflections.

J. B. BURY'S *Later Roman Empire*, vol. ii. bk. vi., deals with the eighth century. His work closes with the fall of Irene, 802. His new volume (1912) goes down to the accession of Basil I., 867.

Dr. HODGKIN, *Italy and Her Invaders*, vol. viii., closes the work with the coronation of Charles as Emperor in 800, and a short account of the close of his reign.

[7] FINLAY, for the entire period down to the capture by the Turks, and Bury down to the middle of the ninth century, have incidentally treated of the economics, art, manners, and literature of the Byzantine world. Mr. Bury also in his notes and appendices to his edition of Gibbon has given most valuable special summaries and references to later authorities. Mr. Bryce's *Holy Roman Empire* ; Mr. Herbert Fisher's *Mediæval Empire*, 2 vols. 1898 ; Mr. Tout's *Empire and the Papacy*, 918-1273, have very useful notices of Byzantine history, and Mr. Charles Oman's *History of the Art of War*, 1898, has valuable chapters, bk. iv., on the Byzantine warfare from A.D. 579 to 1204.

BUSSELL, F. W., *Constitutional History of the Roman Empire.* From the accession of Domitian (81 A.D.) to the retirement of Nicephorus III. (1081 A.D.), 1910.

[8] As to recent monographs on special features of Byzantine history, the following may be consulted :—

I. Administration and Economics

T. H. Krause, *Die Byzantiner des Mittelalters in ihrem Staats-, Hof- und Privatleben*, 1869.—A review of the military, civil, social, and religious organisation of the Empire from the tenth to the fourteenth centuries from Byzantine sources.

Rambaud, *L'Empire Grec au X^me^ Siècle*, 1870.—The life and reign of Constantine Porphyrogenitus.

Heyd (Wilhelm von), *Histoire du Commerce du Levant au Moyen Age*, ed. Fr. 1885.

Schlumberger, *Un Empereur Byzantin, Nicephorus Phocas*, 1890; *L'Epopée Byzantine, Basil II.*, 1896; *Sigillographie de l'Empire Byzantin*, 1884.

Sabatier, *Monnaies Byzantines*, 1862.

Bury, J. B., *The Constitution of the Later Roman Empire*, 1910.

Gelzer, H. D., *Byzantin Kulturgeschichte*, 1909.

II. Law

Zachariae von Lingenthal (C.E.), *Collectio Librorum Juris Graeco-Romani ineditorum*, etc., Leipzig, 1852; *Jus Graeco-Romanum*, 1856, and 3rd ed., 1892; *Histoire du Droit Graeco-Romain*, translated by E. Lauth, Paris, 1870.

Mortreuil (Jean A. B.), *Histoire du Droit Byzantin*, 2 vols., Paris, 1843.

Monferratus (A. G.), *Ecloga Leonis III. et Constantini*, 1889.

Heimbach, *Basilicorum Libri LX.*, 1833-70, ed. by Zachariae von Lingenthal, 6 vols. 4to.

Haubold, C. G., *Manuale Basilicorum*, 1819. 4to.

Ashburner, Walter, *Rhodian Sea-Law*, 1909.

Gelzer, *u.s.*

III. Literature

Krumbacher, Carl, *Geschichte der Byzantinischen Literatur*, 1897.

Hergenröther (Cardinal), *Photius*, 1867-69, 3 vols. 8vo.

IV. Art

Bayet (Ch.), *L'Art Byzantin*, new edition, 1892.

Corroyer (Edouard), *L'Architecture Romaine.*

FERGUSSON, *History of Architecture*, 1874.

TEXIER, *Asie Mineure*.

TEXIER AND PULLAN, *Byzantine Architecture*, 1860.

DE VOGÜÉ, *Les Eglises de Terre Sainte*, 1860; *Architecture Civile et Religieuse de la Syrie*, Paris, 1866-77.

HUEBSCH (trad. Guerber), *Monuments de l'Architecture Chrétienne*, Paris, 1866.

DALTON (O. M.), *Byzantine Art and Archæology*, 1911.

DIEHL (C.), *Manuel de l'Art Byzantin*, 1910.

EBERSOLT (J.), *Grand Palais*, 1910.

MILLET (G.), *Monuments Byzantins*, 1910.

V. ANTIQUITIES

DIDRON, *Annales Archéologiques*, 1844-81; *Iconographie Chrétienne*, 1843, 4to; *Manuel d'Iconographie Chrétienne*, 1845.

LABARTE, *Histoire des Arts Industriels au Moyen Age*, 1864; *Le Palais Impérial de Constantinople*, 1861, 4to.

SALZENBERG, *Alt-christliche Baudenkmale*, 1854, fol.

PASPATES, Βυζαντιναὶ Ἀνάκτορα, 1885; Βυζαντιναὶ Μελέται, 1877.

AGINCOURT (J. Seroux de), *Histoire de l'Art par les Monuments*, 6 vols. fol. 1822.

RUSKIN, *Stones of Venice*.

DIEHL (Charles), *L'Art Byzantin dans l'Italie Méridionale*, Paris, 1894; *Études d'Archéologie Byzantine*, 1877.

DURAND (Julien), *Trésor de San Marc*, Paris, 1862.

KONDAKOV (Nic. Partovich), *Histoire de l'Art Byzantin*, Paris, 1886.

MICHEL (Francisque), *Recherches sur la commerce des étoffes de soie, etc.*, Paris, 1862.

SILVESTRE, *Paléographie Universelle*, Paris, 1841.

SILVESTRE ET CHAMPOLLION, *Universal Palæography*.

WESTWOOD, *Palæographia Sacra Pictoria*.

N. HUMPHREYS, *Illuminated Books of the Middle Ages*.

W. MASKELL, *Ivories in South Kensington Museum*; *Russian Art in South Kensington Museum*.

PROF. A. VAN MILLINGEN, *Byzantine Constantinople, its Walls and Sites*, 1899 and 1906.

A. L. FROTHINGHAM, *Byzantine Artists in Italy*, *American Journal of Archæology*, 1894-95.

[9] The story is well told in the excellent volume by Mr. Pears, a barrister resident in Constantinople and practising in the local

courts. *The Fall of Constantinople in the Fourth Crusade*, by Edwin Pears, LL.D., 1885.

See also Riant, *Exuviæ sacræ Constantin.*, 1887; Hopf, *Chroniques Gréco-Romaines inédites.*

The Crusaders' raid and the sack of Constantinople was one of the most wanton crimes of the Middle Ages, and remains the great opprobrium of the thirteenth century and of Innocent III. Far more destruction was caused to the antiquities of the city by these pretended Crusaders than by the Turks at their conquest. Invaluable records of the ancient world perished therein.

[10] Mr. Oman in his *Art of War in the Middle Ages*, 1898, bk. iv. ch. iv., "Decline of the Byzantine Army (A.D. 1071-1204)," has well explained the collapse of the Empire consequent on the battle of Manzikert, 1071, when Alp-Arslan, at the head of the Seljuks, defeated Romanus Diogenes. Manzikert was the Cannæ, or rather the Zama of the Empire, and if any battle deserves so to be called, was one of the decisive battles of the world. It is singular how many great revolutions in the history of the world were collected close around that date of 1071. As Mr. Bury truly says: "The eleventh century was the turning-point of the Middle Ages" (*English Historical Review*, iv. 41, 1889).

[11] Mr. Bury, in his *Later Roman Empire*, and in his *Eastern Roman Empire*, and in the Appendices to his *Gibbon*, has given us most valuable pictures of the mighty bureaucracy which was the real source of strength of the Byzantine government, both civil and military. Finlay's second volume tells the same story. Consult also Rambaud's *L'Empire Grec au X^me^ Siècle*, which gives an elaborate picture of the administration; also Krause's *Byzantiner des Mittelalters*; Oman's *Art of War* (bk. iv.) and Schlumberger's various works *u.s.* It must be remembered that the organisation of the empire was not at all immutable, but was frequently modified under new conditions. But it was *organic, i.e.* invariably centred round the one head permanently seated in Constantinople, and it was practically *continuous* under all changes of dynasty and palace revolutions. This from the seventh to the tenth centuries made almost the difference between a civilised state and tribes in process of settlement.

[12] Consult Bury, Appendix 5 to *Gibbon*, vol. vi. p. 538, on the Byzantine Navy; also Schlumberger's *Nicephorus Phocas*, ch. ii.; Krause *u.s.*, 265-274; and Gfrörer, *Byzantinische*

Seewesen, ch. xxii. vol. ii.; Heyd, *Commerce du Levant*; and Ashburner's *Rhodian Sea-Law*, 1909, etc.

Surely Mr. Herbert Fisher in his *Mediæval Empire*, vol. ii. p. 273, in making the contrast between Constantinople and Tribur as great as that between Versailles and the home of Fergus M'Ivor, somewhat exaggerates the difference. The second Theophano would hardly have endured a mere Highland clansman's lair. When Theophano arrived in Germany to be the bride of Otto II.—*cum innumeris thesaurorum divitiis*—she was regarded as ruining German simplicity by luxury and dress (see Schlumberger, *Basil II.*).

[13] Banduri, *Imperium Orientale*, 1711, and Ducange, *Constantinopolis Christiana*, Gyllius, and Busbecq, give us some idea of Constantinople in its wreck after the sack of the Latins. Labarte's elaborate work, *Le Palais Impérial*, gives a wonderful picture of the extent and splendour of the Sacred Palace, and see Paspates' *Palaces*, now translated by Dr. Metcalfe (1893).

Gibbon's description of the city was an astonishing act of imagination in one who could only consult books, and those antiquated and imperfect. Those who have never beheld Constantinople should study Salzenberg's grand work on S. Sophia and other churches, and the new account of the Walls of Constantinople in Prof. van Millingen's recent work.

[14] *Corpus Scriptorum Historiæ Byzantinæ;* Codinus, *De Ædificiis Con. de Signis*; Paulus Silentiarius, *Descriptio S. Sophiæ*, translated in Salzenberg.

See Bury's *Gibbon* ii. App. v. p. 546, and consult van Millingen's *Walls*, and his introduction to Murray's *Handbook*.

[15] *Early Travels in Palestine.* T. Wright. 1868. And see Gibbon, ch. lx. vi. 393.

"As they passed along, they gazed with admiration on the capital of the East, or as it should seem, of the earth, rising from her seven hills and towering over the continents of Europe and Asia. The swelling domes and lofty spires of 500 palaces and churches were gilded by the sun and reflected in the waters; the walls were crowded with soldiers and spectators, whose numbers they beheld, of whose temper they were ignorant; and each heart was chilled by the reflection that, since the beginning of the world, such an enterprise had never been undertaken by such a handful of warriors" (see Villehardouin, *Histoire de la Conquête*). All this was true enough in the thirteenth century.

In the tenth or even in the eleventh it would have proved a very different adventure.

[16] Hodgkin, *Italy and her Invaders*, v. 267.
Bury, *Later Roman Empire*, ii. 313.
Dr. Hodgkin's exhaustive work bears frequent witness to this truth. See his accounts of the immense superiority of the armies of Belisarius and of Narses, iv. 5-7, v. 40, 166. Also the various proposals for matrimonial alliances between Charles and the Imperial family, viii. 12, 210, and the embassies to and from Aachen and Byzantium, viii. 245.

[17] The persistence of Otto the Great in demanding a Byzantine alliance, in spite of rebuffs and difficulties, was a striking fact. It is clear that he regarded it as of great importance to have formal recognition of his claim to empire.
Looked at from the point of view of Byzantine history, the coronation of Charles in 800 was an event of local interest which did not vitally concern the Empire of the Bosporus. Neither its subjects nor the Orthodox Church were at all shaken or troubled by it. The establishment of the Holy Roman Empire by Otto and his dynasty in the tenth century was a much more decisive change. It notified to the world that there were two co-existent and permanent empires, one of which was Greek, and only Roman by courtesy. Consult Bury's *Eastern Roman Empire*, chap. x.

[18] These various forms of modern civilisation are brought out in Rambaud's *L'Empire Grec*, Krause's *Byzantiner des Mittelalters*, and Schlumberger's *Empereur Byzantin*. See also Bayet and Heyd.
Perhaps the most curiously modern effect in all the contemporary Byzantine authors is to be found in Constantine Porphyrogenitus' own work, *De Ceremoniis*. His tone is that of a James I. or a Louis XIV. (in his dotage) explaining the niceties of Court etiquette to crowds of obsequious functionaries with all the absolute serenity of supreme power.
The modern character of Constantinople comes out in Sir Henry Pottinger's picturesque romance, *Blue and Green*, 1879, a tale of old Constantinople in the age of Justinian. The Court of Theophilus or Monomachus was far more modern still.

[19] Compare the European coinage of the eighth, ninth, and tenth centuries with the Byzantine as given by Schlumberger and Sabatier. All the emblems of sovereignty are borrowed

and paraded. The eternal ball and cross of western sovereignty may be seen in the right hand of the Archangel in the noble Ivory of our British Museum of the early Byzantine epoch, with its Greek epigraph, "Lord receive thy servant, though thou knowest his transgressions." Compare the sovereigns and emperors on Byzantine and in Teutonic illuminations.

Mr. Freeman in his *Norman Conquest*, vol. i. 62-70, and Appendix C, has some interesting remarks on the "Imperial supremacy of the West Saxon Kings." He inclines to think that their use of imperial forms and titles was only in part imitative, and was a *bona fide* claim to rank above kingship. That may be true of such terms as *Basileus*, *Cæsar*, *imperator*, *monarchus*. But when we find Saxon princelets calling themselves *primicerius*, *archon*, *pacificus*, *invictissimus*, *gloriosus*, and so forth, it is plain that they were borrowing grandiloquent titles.

Charles's formal style, "serenissimus Augustus, crowned of God, great and pacific emperor," and the like, was identical with the Byzantine style. There is something sublime in Charlemagne calling himself pacific.

[20] As we read in Hodgkin's *Italy*, viii. ch. v., and Bryce's *Holy Roman Empire*, ch. iv., Dr. Hodgkin's view of the assumption of the Imperial Crown by Charles, that it was almost forced on him by the Pope, has every evidence in its favour. The empire of Charles had at first more of an ecclesiastical than a purely temporal character. Neither Charles nor his agents saw, or could see, all that the empire became with Hohenstauffens and Hapsburgs. Mr. Fisher has well pointed out in his opening chapter that the Western Empire was very loosely and differently understood down to the coronation of Otto I. in 962.

[21] The modifications in the organisation of the Empire have been thoroughly worked out by Mr. Bury in his two volumes; and he has summarised the results in Appendices to his *Gibbon*, vi. 3, 4, and 5.

There is no example of equal method and adaptation to changed conditions in the organisation of the Western Empire, either in its early Latin or later Teutonic form. The Byzantine Empire was a real *government*, and did not become a *title* until the very end.

[22] The whole of Mr. Oman's chapter on *Byzantine Armies*, bk. iv. A.D. 579-1204, should be studied. He concludes (p. 201):—

"The art of war as it was understood at Constantinople in the tenth century was the only system of real merit existing in

the world; no Western nation could have afforded such a training to its officers till the sixteenth, or we may even say the seventeenth century." He goes on to analyse the *Tactics* of Nicephorus Phocas in the tenth century: "it might be used on the Indian north-west frontier to-day, so practical is it."

[23] Bury's *Gibbon*, vi. App. 5.
Schlumberger's *Nicephorus Phocas*, ch. ii. p. 32.
Of this wonderful expedition and conquest of Crete we have the contemporary account of Leo Diaconus in *Corp. Byzant. Histor.*, and the poem of Theodosius the Deacon, in the same volume.

[24] So Luitprand reports in his amusing *Legatio*. Of course we must take much of the witty Bishop's report to be gross exaggeration and flattery of his imperial master. If Otto the Great had believed all the Bishop reported of the barbarism of Byzantium, why did he again risk a rebuff and ultimately win for his son the imperial princess "born in the Purple"?
Luitprand tells us what the words of Nicephorus were as to the sea-power of his empire compared with that of Otto—"nec est in mari domino tuo classium numerus. Navigantium fortitudo mihi soli inest, qui cum classibus aggrediar bello, maritimas eius civitates demoliar, et quae fluminibus sunt vicina, redigam in favillam." Nor was this an empty boast. It reminds one of Cromwell's threat to the Italian princes.
The famous "Greek fire" has been fully discussed by Schlumberger, *Phocas*, ch. ii., and by Bury, ii. 311, 319, and see his *Gibbon*, vi. App. 5. He explains the great varieties of these combustible and explosive compounds, and the modes of using them. One method seems to have been a form of gunpowder ignited to discharge liquid combustibles through some sort of gun. Constantine Porphyrogenitus in his work *De administrando Imperio*, ch. xlviii., calls this τὸ διὰ τῶν σιφώνων ἐκφερόμενον πῦρ ὑγρόν, and says it was invented by Callinicus of Heliopolis in the time of Constantine Pogonatus (*i.e.* seventh century). The Byzantines seem to have reached the point of inventing (1) gunpowder, (2) using its explosion to drive missiles, (3) applying the gunpowder to guns (σίφωνες). Why did they get no farther? Perhaps they were unable to use hard or solid missiles, or to expel the charge beyond a short distance, because they could not make guns strong enough to resist a powerful charge. Their σίφωνες were in fact "Roman candles" and other fireworks. They do not seem to have been effective except at close quarters, to defend walls and on board ships. For these purposes, the

"Greek fire" seems to have been quite crushing; and from the seventh to the tenth century, it gave the Byzantine garrisons and warships some such superiority over Saracens and Scythians that gunpowder in modern times gives to civilised nations against barbarians. Consult Oman, *Art of War*, 545-48.

[25] A series of German scholars have collected and edited the post-Justinian Law of the Roman Empire. Zachariae von Lingenthal has published *Collectio Librorum Juris Graeco-Romani ineditorum, etc.*, Leipzig, 1852, in which the Isaurian codes and institutes are collected. His 3rd edition is of 1892. His *Jus Graeco-Romanum*, Leipzig, 1856, has been translated into French by E. Lauth as *Histoire du Droit Greco-Romain*, Paris, 1870. And Mortreuil has published *Histoire du Droit Byzantin*, 2 vols., Paris, 1843.

The immense collection of the *Basilica* was published by Heimbach, and edited by Zachariae: *Basilicorum Libri LX Gr. et Lat.*, 6 tom., 4to, Leipzig, 1833-70. Also Haubold, *Manuale Basilicorum*, 1819, a collation of Justinian with the later law.

Mr. Bury has treated the post-Justinian law in his chapter on Leo III., ii. 411-420, but his *Later Roman Empire* has not reached the Basilian era. He treats it also in his *Gibbon*, v. App. 11, p. 525, but mainly from the point of view of criminal law.

Mr. Roby, in his *Introduction to the Study of Justinian's Digest*, 1844, pp. ccxli-ccliv, has touched on this Greco-Roman law. Otherwise English civilians do not seem to have concerned themselves with a branch of Roman law on which foreign jurists have worked for more than two generations.

[26] Savigny's *History of Roman Law in the Middle Ages* (1815-1831) was written before the publications of Heimbach and Zachariae, and he does not seem to have paid any attention to the persistence and development of Roman law in the East. He triumphantly proved in his famous work that the Roman law was not absolutely extinct, and he found traces of it in Rome, Ravenna, amongst Lombards, Burgundians, Franks, and Goths. But he is not able to show anything like a *Corpus Juris*, schools of Justinian law, or any systematic treatises down to the rise of the Bolognese school early in the twelfth century. He suggests as a reason for the revival of civil law in Bologna that it was near to Ravenna, which did not cease to belong to the Empire until 751. We may remember that Amalfi and some other Italian seaports remained in Byzantine hands much later, and Byzantine influence in Calabria continued down to the Norman conquest.

[27] Mr. Hodgkin, in his *Italy and its Invaders*, vi., has treated of the Lombard laws, and has noticed those of the Isaurian emperors.

If we turn to these Lombard and Frank codes, or to the Caroline capitularies, or the Saxon laws as collected by Dr. Liebermann, *Gesetze der Angelsachsen* (1899), 4to, we find rude, semi-barbarous penalties and "dooms,"—so much for cutting off a thumb, so much for killing a slave, and the like,—but nothing that could be called a scientific code of civil law. Whilst Ine and Rothari in the seventh century, Alfred and the Carlings in the ninth century, were exacting fines and promulgating penalties for violence, the Byzantine world was continuously ordered by working versions of Justinian's law. Down to the time of Cnut or the Franconian emperors there is nothing in Western Europe that, as a scientific code of law, can be compared with the *Basilica*.

As Mr. Fisher well reminds us (*The Mediæval Empire*, i. 156, ch. iv.), there was no knowledge of Roman law in Germany until much later.

[28] *Basilicorum Libri LX.* (Heimbach and Zachariae), vol. i. p. xxi. This fine preface is worthy of Justinian himself, and certainly contains an unanswerable criticism on the redaction of the *Corpus Juris*. It is obvious that the Basilian editors do not cite the *Corpus Juris* direct from the Latin text. They use translations, summaries, commentaries, and handbooks which had multiplied during three centuries. How strikingly does such a fact witness to the persistence of civil law in the East as compared with its hibernation in the West—a dormant state which till the time of Savigny was thought to be death. Contrast with the rude laws of Franks and Saxons the titles of the *Procheiron* of Basil. These run thus:—Sponsalia—Marriage—Dower—Property of Husband and Wife—Dissolution of Marriage—Gift—Revocation—Sale—Lease—Pledge—Bailment—Partnership—Testament—Emancipation—Disinheriting—Legacies—Tutors. Here we are in the region of scientific jurisprudence.

[29] The great work of Salzenberg, *Alt-christliche Baudenkmale*, with its excellent reproductions, should be studied by those who have never seen Constantinople. A scientific and historical account of the great church of the Holy Wisdom ("the fairest church in all the world"—Sir J. Mandeville) has been published by W. R. Lethaby and Harold Swainson (London, 1894, 4to). These enthusiasts—the one historical scholar, the other architect

—declare that "Sancta Sophia is the most interesting building on the world's surface"—"one of the four great pinnacles of architecture"—"the supreme monument of the Christian cycle." Their work contains references to the principal authorities for the history and antiquities of the building. See also Fergusson, *History of Architecture*, vol. ii. (Byzantine Architecture); Bury, *Later Roman Empire*, ii. 40-54; and E. Corroyer, *L'Architecture Romaine*; and Bayet, *L'Art Byzantin*.

According to Melchior de Vogüé, *La Syrie Centrale*, the arch supported by the free column may be found of a date earlier than that of Diocletian. If he is right, the *praetorium* of Mousmieh, built by Egnatius Fuscus, A.D. 160-169, under Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus, has a definite example of the free column supporting an arch. A column engaged in a wall and bearing a vault was familiar enough in Roman baths and basilicas of the second century. It must be doubtful if Diocletian's palace at Spalato really saw the first invention of this supreme discovery in the art of building. See Freeman, *Essays*, 3rd series, and *Architectural Sketches*.

Fossati's *Agia Sofia*, with chromo-lithographs, gives some suggestion of the colour of the interior and of the general position of this sublime temple.

[30] If we accept the account given by Lanciani (*Ruins and Excavations of Ancient Rome*, 1897, pp. 476-488) and other topographers as to the true date of the Pantheon as we see it, and its relation to the famous inscription on the pediment in front—M · AGRIPPA · L · F · COS · TERTIUM · FECIT. It had always seemed to be a puzzle why the Pantheon, with its marvellous dome, was not imitated and followed for a century and a half, if it were really built so early as B.C. 27. If the true date of the Pantheon be A.D. 125, it belongs to the era of the mighty domes and hemicycles of the second century, and is not so inconceivably premature and solitary in the evolution of Roman architecture.

[31] It seems impossible to study the works of De Vogüé, Texier, and travellers and archæologists in Asia, copied and noted in Fergusson's works, without coming to a definite conclusion as to the great *influence* of S. Sophia and Byzantine building on the whole East. The modifications of Byzantine types, the immediate source of the influence and the precise dates and channels of intercourse, are complicated problems. Syrian, Armenian, Persian, and Russian styles have their own characteristics. The decisive fact is the general impression pro-

duced on the Eastern world by the grandest, most colossal, and most beautiful of all the dome-plus-arch buildings in the world.

[32] Labarte's great work, *Histoire des Arts industriels au moyen âge*, 4 vols. 8vo, 1864, with its illustrative plates, gives a complete résumé of the progress of the decorative arts, from the capture of Rome to the Renascence. In each case he makes the arrival of the Greek artists in Italy, owing to the Iconoclast persecution in the eighth century, the critical epoch. He has surveyed the history of the arts in turn—sculpture, metal-work, jewelry, enamels, ivories, and illuminated painting, completely establishing the priority and stimulating influence of the Byzantine schools for the early epochs from the sixth to the eleventh centuries. The result is stated summarily in his smaller work, now translated, Labarte, *Handbook of the Arts of the Middle Ages*, 1855, pp. 3 and 17.

The school of Constantinople was in the tenth century the source from which Italy and Germany borrowed artists. The famous *Pala d'oro* of S. Mark's at Venice was ordered by the Doge Orseolo from Constantinople (A.D. 991). The gates of *S. Paolo fuori le mura* at Rome were ordered by Hildebrand from the same school.

Labarte's beautiful reproductions in colours are particularly useful for the illuminated manuscripts. The Vienna Manuscript, painted for Juliana Anicia in the sixth century, is almost classical, not inferior to some Pompeian wall-paintings. The manuscript of Gregory of Nazianzus in the *Bibliothèque Nationale* of Paris, executed in the ninth century for Basil I., is magnificent. Others in Paris are the *Psalms* of the tenth century, and the *Gospel* executed for Nicephorus Phocas, and a manuscript is in the Library of S. Mark's of the date of Basil II. (976). These paintings in design, colour, and drawing are equal to good Italian work of the fifteenth century.

[33] Mosaic decoration (from late Greek μουσεῖον) has been treated in a useful monograph by Canon Venables in *Dictionary of Christian Antiquities*. The existing mosaic pictures in S. Sophia and other churches at Constantinople and at Thessalonica are as grand as any wall-paintings of any period. That the mosaics of Ravenna, Rome, Venice, Magna Graecia, and Palermo, all anterior to the twelfth century, have a Byzantine origin, or were executed by the aid of the Byzantine school, is obvious both from external and internal evidence. Consult Labarte, *u.s.*, also Ch. Diehl's *L'Art Byzantin dans l'Italie Méridionale*, 1894, *Manuel*, 1910; Dalton, O. M. 1911.

He has proved that the revival of mosaic art in the eleventh century was accomplished under Byzantine influence—"the incontestable superiority of the Byzantine artists made them the educators of Italy." Extant Italian works at Torcello, Venice, Grotta Ferrata, Monte Cassino, S. Angelo-in-Formis, with their Greek lettering and symbols, amply establish this. The fact that Roman lettering is found in Italy with Greek types, is no evidence against a Byzantine origin; though the presence of Greek letters and types is conclusive on the other side.

See Frothingham, *American Journal of Archæology*, vol. ix., 1894. During the eighth century Rome was full of Greek monks, ecclesiastics, and artists. In 867 Lazarus, a prominent Byzantine painter, was sent to Rome—"pictoriae artis eximie eruditi" (*Liber Pontific*). San Prassede at Rome, and S. Mark's at Venice, were executed by Greek artists. The bronze doors of Amalfi, Salerno, Ravello, and St. Paul's at Rome were obviously of Byzantine design. The rough drawings of the gates of St. Paul's in d'Agincourt, taken before the fire of 1823, are visibly Greek. And the *palo d'oro* enamels of St. Mark's at Venice exhibit the same type. Both were ordered from Constantinople.

The mediæval mosaics of Europe show one type, and one set of *motifs*, and down to the fifteenth century these seem to have had a common origin in the Byzantine world.

[34] Labarte (*Histoire des Arts*, vol. i.) treats of the art of ivory-carving, and his sumptuous plates give an idea of the state of the art in the Byzantine period. He regards the noble Michael of our Museum to be of the age of Justinian. Several of the early diptychs he reproduces have the character of Western work as late as the fourteenth century. The South Kensington Museum contains numerous caskets and diptychs, original and copies, of which the *Handbook* by W. Maskell gives a useful account. The Veroli casket in that collection, if really mediæval, is proof that the classical sense of form did not entirely expire with Polytheism.

[35] Very fine Byzantine illuminations before the twelfth century are not numerous, and none of the best seem to be in England. But the reproductions given by Labarte, by Silvestre and Champollion, *Universal Palæography*, by Westwood, *Palæographia Sacra Pictoria*, and by N. Humphreys, *Illuminated Books of the Middle Ages*, show grand examples of the early Byzantine school in Venice, Vienna, Rome, and Paris. Silvestre

(*Paléographie Universelle*, Paris, 1841) reproduces some of these. The Byzantine miniatures of our British Museum, if not equal to the best abroad, are greatly superior in drawing and composition to the purely Western paintings down to the thirteenth or fourteenth centuries. The calligraphy of the Greeks does not equal that of the best Irish, French, and German schools, and the Greeks eschew the fantastic borders and initial letters which are the main features of the Northern, especially of the Irish schools, reaching their acme in the Book of Kells. But in dignity of pose, in drawing, in force of expression, some of the best Byzantine paintings anterior to the eleventh century have never been surpassed at any period of the art of miniature. From that epoch it rapidly declined, and became at last utterly conventional and mechanical.

Much light was thrown on the history of Byzantine art by M. Didron's discovery of the painter's handbook in the hands of the monks of Mount Athos. The ἑρμηνεία τῆς Ζωγραφικῆς, translated and published as *Manuel d'iconographie Chrétienne*, 1845, is said by Didron to be as old as the eleventh century. Its general instructions may have been much older. It contains first, elaborate practical rules for the painter, and next it gives the *motifs* of some hundreds of designs for compositions, representing every incident in Old and New Testament and in Sacred Hagiology. Here, in fact, in an old monkish practice-book, are the types of sacred art as we find it in sculpture, mosaic, fresco, metal, and illuminated work from the sixth to the sixteenth century, and from Syria to Ireland, throughout the Christian world. The scheme which these Greek monks used traditionally to represent the Last Supper is essentially that which Leonardo and Raffaelle adopted. The scheme of their Last Judgment is that of a thousand mosaics, frescoes, carvings, and illuminations throughout Europe, and indeed the same as Michael Angelo painted in the Sistine Chapel. It would be difficult to find, down to the sixteenth century, any representation of a sacred incident in any form of art in Europe, of which the type is not given in this old Greek ἑρμηνεία. Christian art, like Christian theology and Catholic ritual, was formed throughout the Middle Ages out of a Greek *matrix*—Eastern, though not Byzantine specially, until the advance of the Crescent forced Greek Christendom back to the Bosporus.

[36] See Francisque-Michel, *Recherches sur le commerce, la fabrication, et l'usage des étoffes de soie, d'or, et d'argent en l'Occident pendant le Moyen Age*. 2 vols. Paris, 1852.

The manufacture of silk embroidery was an eminently Greek industry, derived from Ptolemaic Alexandria, and the Empire became its emporium and seat. It was carried to wonderful elaboration. The robe of a senator had embroidered on it no less than six hundred figures picturing the entire life of Christ. The famous Dalmatic of the Vatican is drawn in Schlumberger's *Nicephorus Phocas*, p. 301.. It is a wonderful work of embroidery. These were manufactured at Byzantium and other Greek cities and sent all over the West. William of Tyre records the mass of robes—*tapetibus et holosericis*—found by the Crusaders at the sack of Antioch in 1098, as does Villehardouin of the prodigious quantity of samite found at Constantinople at the sack of 1204. During the Middle Ages quantities of these embroideries were sent to kings and nobles and greatly esteemed. One of the stuffs was called *imperialis*.

[37] On the subject of Byzantine literature consult the great work of Carl Krumbacher, *Geschichte der Byzantinischen Literatur*, 2nd ed., by Ehrbuch and Gelzer (Munich, 1897). This elaborate work, in some 1200 pp., reviews the whole course of Byzantine literature from A.D. 527 to 1453. It is a field whereon English scholars seem never to have touched. It is no doubt probable that these numerous works are now as nearly as possible worthless, and few living Englishmen are likely to devote their time to them. But as a fact in general history, their production has great interest. Some of the Byzantine historians rise above that dead level of dullness with which they are usually dismissed. Krumbacher will not allow that even the Byzantine poetry is absolutely barren. The Silentiary's poem on S. Sophia is unquestionably ingenious, and even the iambics of George Pisides and of Theodosius the Deacon, are less barbarous than the Latin contemporary effusions. I suppose some worse verses are annually sent up to the examiners in our universities. Even modern laureates do not always produce high poetry.

I cannot speak from knowledge on the subject of Music. But I gather from the learned article with that title in Smith's *Dictionary of Christian Antiquities*, that "for the first thousand years of the Christian era, the antique Greek system of music was adopted, with but few alterations, and those chiefly modifications of the compass of the scale and of the notation." "During the first six centuries of the Christian era the Greek musical notation was in universal use." The great change was not made until the eleventh century by Guido of Arezzo.

The Byzantine court maintained a regular band of musicians and organs. Leo the Isaurian, and his son Copronymus, encouraged music, and are said to have given public concerts. Copronymus sent to Pippin the first organ that ever reached Western Europe (Bury, ii. 462).

[38] It is impossible for modern scholarship to ignore all that it owes to the laborious lexicographers, scholiasts, and anecdote-mongers of Byzantium, although our own generation has almost forgotten how the knowledge of the Greek language and literature has been preserved to Western Europe. Amongst other of its debts to Mediæval Greece we might note the various Greek words in modern speech which are derived through Mediæval Latin, French, or Italian, not being new coinage such as *telegram*, *enteritis*, or *atlas*. The words of official, artistic, ecclesiastical, and ceremonial usage derived through Low Latin, or *lingua franca*, are very numerous, and point to a borrowing of practice—almanac, policy (of assurance), catholic, chemist, dogma, tactics, anthem, basilica, cemetery, diploma, doxology, pope, priest, psalm, dimity, heresy, hermit, laity, litany, mosaic, pandect, parchment, piastre, patriot, patriarch, pragmatic, protocol, samite, syndic, synod, piazza, torso, catapult, bottle, butler, encaustic, hierarchy, catacomb. Some of these words were, no doubt, in use before the transfer of the seat of empire to Byzantium, but their constant usage in the Greek world has led to their general adoption in Europe.

[39] Neander, *Church History*, passim.
Milman, *Latin Christianity*, vols. i. and ii.
Neale, *Holy Eastern Church*.
Hodgkin, *Italy and Her Invaders*, vols. iv. vi. viii.
Bury, *Later Roman Empire*, vols. i. and ii.
Bury, *Eastern Roman Empire*, chaps. i.-vi.
"Controversies" in Smith's *Dictionary of Christian Antiquities*; "Lives" in Smith's *Dictionary of Christian Biography*.

[40] The Iconoclastic movement down to the death of Theophilus (A.D. 842) has been efficiently treated by Bury in his works. A sketch of the whole movement is given in the *Dictionary of Christian Antiquities* under "Images." The interesting and picturesque narratives of Gibbon and of Milman hardly do justice to the long persistence of the Iconoclastic movement, and the enthusiastic support which it must have received from the martial Asiatic portions of the Empire. It was a far deeper and more national effort than the arbitrary ideas of such imperial reformers as Tzar Peter or Francis II.

[41] The jealousy of Old Rome for New Rome began from the first. Claudian and Sidonius in the fifth century are full of it, see Dill, *Roman Society in the Fifth Century*, p. 283, etc. Under Gregory and successive Popes, this Roman jealousy turned into theological hatred and contempt, as Fisher remarks (*Mediæval Empire*, i. 19), "the whole influence of the Latin Church was exerted to preach a misleading view of historical continuity." The partisans of Latin Church and of Western Empire vied with each other to the same end, whenever Pope or Empire were not beset by rivals and enemies nearer home. It still remains the task of historical scholarship to remove much of the misconception which yet lingers in the mind of the public.

CHAPTER XI

THE EASTERN ROMAN EMPIRE (A.D. 802-867)*

THE Regius Professor at Cambridge now resumes his great task of clearing up the complex and extraordinary story of the New Rome on the Golden Horn which, in 1889, he wrote from Arcadius to Irene (A.D. 395 to 800). The present instalment of some two generations, which he calls the Amorian period, is on a somewhat more detailed scale, and nearly two-thirds of the present volume are devoted not to the fierce struggles of dynastic ambition, intrigue, and bloodshed, but to the development of religion, literature, and art, to financial and military administration, and wars with Saracens, Bulgarians, Slavs, and Russians.

It is an historical field on which an immense amount of new matter has been recently accumulated by German, Russian, Hungarian, French, Greek, and Oriental scholars, but where as yet hardly any other English historians since Gibbon and Finlay have laboured on an extended scale. Not only has an enormous amount of new learning been produced since Gibbon and Finlay—but our entire conception of the later Roman Empire, its civilisation and its

* *The Eastern Roman Empire* (A.D. 802-867), by J. B. Bury, Reg. Prof. Modern History, Cambridge. Macmillan & Co., 8vo, 1912.

achievements, has been transformed since their days mainly by Professor Bury himself and by such students as Krumbacher, Schlumberger, and Vasil'ev.

The accepted view that prevailed down to our own time was, that from Justinian, or say Heraclius, down to the Turkish conquests, the Roman Empire remained in a kind of lethargy, with universal feebleness, ignorance, and obstruction. Its rulers were regarded as pompous puppets; its religion was servile superstition; and its general civilisation a long unbroken record of sameness and imbecility. From this prime error of history we have been gradually rescued by a series of scholars, of whom in England Professor Bury stands the chief—indeed, until recently, almost alone.

We have understood now, for at least a generation, that the Byzantine Empire exhibited at times wonderful energy and military genius, that it had its epochs and its course of development, not so sudden and violent as those of Western Europe and rather less spasmodic and unexpected. And we have long known that modern Europe owed Byzantium a great and varied debt in literature and in many industrial arts. But we had not that close knowledge of facts and details which would make all this intelligible by trustworthy instances and proofs. What was essential to know were the ideas, persons, and circumstances whereby change was effected to compare in detail one epoch with another. The knowledge of these was slowly worked out by a mass of studies in Russian, Greek, Arabic, and Balkanic memoirs, the very existence of which was unknown to Gibbon and his contemporaries and successors. Professor Bury has now made this foreign learning accessible to English readers.

All this is strongly put in Mr. Bury's Preface :—

> "The fallacious assumption, once accepted as a truism, that the Byzantine spirit knew no change or shadow of turning, that the social atmosphere of the Eastern Rome was always immutably the same, has indeed been discredited; but even in recent sketches of this civilisation by competent hands we can see unconscious survivals of that belief. The curve of the whole development has still to be accurately traced, and this can only be done by defining each section by means of the evidence which applies to that section alone. No other method will enable us to discriminate the series of gradual changes which transformed the Byzantium of Justinian into that—so different in a thousand ways—of the last Constantine."

When we read Professor Bury's narrative of the Amorian Emperors in the first half of the ninth century—the age be it remembered of the successors of Charles the Frank and of the predecessors of Alfred of Wessex, of the Lombard confusion and the degradation of the Papacy—we are struck by the appearance of modern manners, culture, and civilisation as contrasted with the primitive rudeness of Western Europe.

In comparing Byzantium of the ninth century with any modern times, it must be taken to mean the Italian Cinque Cento or the worst epochs of the Dukeries of the age of Sforzas, Baglionis, and Borgias. The story of the conspiracies, assassinations, intrigues round the Imperial court, the audacity and craft of the adventurers, the frenzy of religious sects, and the alternate corruption and ascendancy of monks and patriarchs—all this is curiously like Italy of the Renascence. Although Western Europe in the ninth century has a record of blood and crime at least as great, it is not accompanied with such refinements of

luxury, literary activity, and systematic organisation. A Michael, a Theophilus, a Theodore, a Photius seem to us a Visconti or a Medici some six centuries in advance—and still more so are the Irenes, Eudocias, Theodoras like Lucrezias, Beatrices, and Violantes of the fifteenth or sixteenth century.

One must at once put aside the conventional idea that the New Rome of the ninth century was wanting in courage, energy, invention—that it has any of the qualities usually thought to be Greek. On the contrary, its energy is often spasmodic, and as violent as that of Old Rome under a Pope Julius or a Leo X. The Empire in truth was Greek only by language and literary tradition. Its strength rested on an extraordinary compound of races and civilisations partly Oriental, partly European. There were Syrians, Armenians, Phrygians, Thracians, Slaves, and almost every people of the Balkan Peninsula and the shores of the Euxine. Amorion, which gave its name to the dynasty, was the capital of Anatolia in Asia Minor, and the founder of the family was a rude Asiatic countryman. It has been perhaps the main cause of our misunderstanding the "Lower Empire" that jealous Catholic scribes taught Europe to regard Byzantine civilisation as merely decadent Greek. There was really little purely Greek in it apart from language. It was an amalgam of various races which from time to time bred men of surpassing boldness, personal courage, and strong will.

Another most significant point in this story is the remarkable energy and influence of women. On the whole the women of the leading families occupy a larger part on the stage than they do in the ninth century in Western Europe. There are, of course, round Charles, or Alfred, or Henry, or Otto, women of character, virtue, or power. But there are more

of such women in Eastern Rome; and not a few of them are women of noble character and of many virtues equal to that of any famous women in modern history.

The annals of hardly any country during the Middle Ages and Renascence can equal those of the Byzantine Empire in sensational incidents, astonishing exploits, tragedies, and heroisms. Every reign is a drama, for the most part, beginning and ending in conspiracy and bloodshed. The family histories of imperial and powerful houses are crowded records of intermarriages, divorces, intrigue, and retaliation. The fidelity and devotion of partisans, the intervention of priests, the emergence from convents of princes, princesses, and royal widows, and their no less sudden withdrawal into the rest of the cloister—all this makes a fascinating and dramatic tale. It is not to be understood that the actors in all these crimes and struggles were specially cruel or vicious. On the whole, they are certainly not worse than the magnates of Germany, France, and Italy, from Charlemagne to Leo X. And there are some characters of merit and nobility, and perhaps with a higher culture.

Modern history has no story more dramatic than that of the Empress Irene of Athens. Born an obscure provincial, she was raised by a stroke of fortune to be the wife of the Lord of the Eastern Empire. On the early death of her consort, she became the supreme sovereign, first in the name of her infant son Constantine, and then, when he was deposed and blinded, as sole autocrat during five years of vigorous policy and an ecclesiastical revolution (797-802). Then, as sovran of the East, she received a proposal of marriage from Charles, the sovran of the West. But, whilst the ambassadors of the mighty Emperor were awaiting an answer to

this offer in Constantinople, a palace conspiracy broke out, which in a night consigned the Empress to an island prison, where she pined and died; and the Patriarch in Santa Sophia crowned a certain Nicephorus, a civilian minister who was what we call the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Irene disclosed the place where a large hoard of treasure was concealed, and admitted that her fall was an expiation of her crimes.

Nicephorus I., the new Emperor, was said to be descended from an Arabian king, who had once turned Mussulman and then recanted and entered the Eastern realm. His enemies said he was a swineherd —"a hypocrite, avaricious, cruel, irreligious, unchaste, a perjured slave, a wicked revolutionary"— but Professor Bury thinks he was a competent statesman, a strong and masterful man, prepared to incur unpopularity in discharging his duty as guardian of the state. Such is the value of "contemporary documents" when scrutinised by the sagacious historian of a larger purview. Nicephorus held his great office with eminent ability and energy, suppressed two dangerous revolts in his army and his palace ministers, and after a vigorous administration of nine years he took up arms in a war against the Bulgarians; and falling into an ambuscade, he lost his life through his failure as a soldier.

Nicephorus I. was succeeded by his son Stauracius, for whom four years before a beautiful Athenian had been chosen as wife after one of the fanciful "bride-shows" which were the rule in the Empire, and were afterwards imitated. Theophano, like Irene, like Athenais, was selected as future Augusta from the city of Athene, after a formal beauty competition. These strange shows were an official ceremony. Messengers were sent out through the Empire to summon maidens of rare accomplishments and charm to attend at the

Palace, where they were solemnly passed in review by the Emperor regnant or presumptive, his parents and court. Some famous romances have gathered round this celebrated function which in various forms was practised from time immemorial in the East. In more decorous and less public ways it is not unknown in Western courts.

The unfortunate Stauracius had been struck down in the battle that killed his father with a wound in the groin which proved to be mortal, and from which he lingered in helpless agony for some time. But before he had been nominal sovran for two months, a palace conspiracy, supported by the Patriarch, the Senate, and the imperial guard, proclaimed and crowned as Emperor Michael the husband of Stauracius' sister, almost before the dying autocrat knew what was being done. Stauracius was suddenly informed that he was deposed, tonsured, dressed as a monk, and removed to a monastery, to which his beautiful and childless bride Theophano also was consigned. Procopia, his sister, with her husband, the new Emperor, visited the wretched sufferer on his couch, and assured him that their act was dictated by reasons of state and his own imminent decease. He felt that he had been betrayed by the Church and by his relations. But his displacement was an obvious necessity of public welfare.

Michael Rangabé, the new Emperor, the son-in-law of Nicephorus I., was, like him, of low birth, and had been one of the leading officers who assisted in overthrowing the revolt of Bardanes. He was a man of good nature, but incapable, weak, and extravagant. He recalled Leo, the Armenian soldier who had escaped in the late revolt. In an expedition against the Bulgarians he suffered an overwhelming defeat, and then put his army and his empire in the hands

of Leo, his rival and old colleague. The Church, the Court, the soldiers joined in the desire for an abler chief. Leo was proclaimed and crowned, and Michael, his wife, and children took monastic garb and fled for refuge to a Church of the Virgin. Leo, as the way was, mutilated the male children of his rival to deprive them of any possible succession. The fallen emperor, the empress, and their children were removed to separate islands, and received an adequate allowance after only two years of royalty.

Leo V. proved an able and just ruler. Of low origin, an Armenian soldier of fortune, he had made his way by his own energy and courage. He proved to be a successful sovran and defended the empire from Northern and Eastern enemies; but, on reviving the Iconoclast movement, he offended the monks and priests. Another Michael, a rough but able soldier, his commander of the imperial guard, began to conspire against his former comrade and present emperor. Then follows a scene of intrigue and ferocity as dramatic and as exciting as anything to be found in history, ancient or modern.

Leo had long suspected Michael, and at last had positive proof of his treason. On Christmas Eve Michael was arrested, tried by the Emperor in person, and condemned to be burnt in the Palace furnace, tied to an ape, in the primitive fashion of old Rome. The Empress, roused from her bed by news of this horrible sentence, rushed to her husband's presence barefoot, and implored him not to stain the sacred Day of the Nativity with such a barbarous deed. Leo gave way, saying that she had saved his soul from sin, but imperilled his life and that of herself and her children. The Emperor, tortured by omens, oracles, and dreams, could not sleep, but he stole secretly to the room where his prisoner was secured under heavy

bolts and in fetters of which he held the key. Michael and his jailor were asleep and the Emperor stood over both with a look of menace and withdrew. But a boy in the service of Michael concealed under his master's bed watched the entire incident and roused both Michael and the jailor. The man, seeing that he too was in danger, by the agency of a priest brought to confess the criminal, summoned Michael's fellow-conspirators. They, disguised as the choir entering the Palace at dawn to sing the Christmas Hymn, concealed themselves in the private Chapel, where the Emperor was to take part in the early service. At a signal, the disguised choirmen drew their swords and rushed upon the Emperor. He stood at bay at the altar wielding in defence the sacred ornaments, his only weapon. A gigantic conspirator, known as One-and-a-half, cut off his right arm at a blow and then his head. And after seven years of energetic rule, the great Leo V. perished in a palace conspiracy. The headless body was dragged naked and exposed in the Hippodrome. The four sons were mutilated to extinguish their claims and imprisoned in an island, the youngest dying under the knife. The women were relegated to another island, where the widowed Empress could reflect upon her unfortunate interference with her husband's justice.

Whilst the assassins of Leo were completing their slaughter Michael lay in his cell waiting for a throne or a hideous death. His colleagues freed him and hurried him to be crowned at noon; but as the key of his fetters had been hidden in his victim's clothes, the gyves had to be broken by tools. Michael the Amorian, the second of the name, was a rude but bold soldier who ruled with skill for nine years, and, after another bride-show, married his son Theophilus to Theodora, a Paphlagonia lady of the official world.

For two years he was engaged, and the Empire was racked by an obstinate civil war led by a colleague and rival, a Sclavonian soldier named Thomas. The war of the rival Emperors is an exciting story of desperate battles, sieges, intrigues, and personation. It ended at last by the capture and barbarous execution of the leaders of the rebellion, and after a reign of some peaceful and successful years Michael II. died of disease (A.D. 829).

Theophilus, the son of Michael, had long been associated in government with his father, and proved to be for thirteen years an able, just, and brilliant ruler, though hated by the Church as an iconoclast. He is charged with cruelly persecuting the worshippers of images, and the records of his reign have been written by his clerical enemies. At his death the long struggle was finally ended by a Council in 843 A.D. which was a species of compromise. Icons, in the sense of sculpture or graven images, were discarded by the Eastern Church, whilst Icons, as meaning pictures, or embossed and gilt or jewelled tablets, were more furiously worshipped than ever before.

Michael III., A.D. 842-867, "reigned for a quarter of a century, but he never governed," says Professor Bury; when of age to rule he had neither capacity nor desire. His mother Theodora, with good advice, reigned in his name for fourteen years, when she and her chief minister were displaced by Bardas, Theodora's brother, who ruled in his nephew's name for some ten years with signal energy and success. After the murder of the Empress's minister, Bardas took his offices and authority, and in peace and war, in civil administration, and in ecclesiastical policy, he proved to be a model sovran, whilst the frivolous Michael III. pursued his trivial sports, and his ribald follies. But at length Bardas was overthrown by a rival even more

energetic and able, and much more subtle than himself, the famous Basil the Macedonian, the founder of the great Basilian dynasty which endured for some two centuries.

The life story of this man is one of the most romantic in history. Of an Armenian family settled in Thrace, he had been carried as a prisoner into Macedonia, but at the age of twenty-five he escaped and made his way as a penniless adventurer to Constantinople. There his great stature and superb physique recommended him to an officer of the household, who engaged him as groom. Then he was adopted by a Greek lady of great wealth, who gave him an estate. The chance of his breaking in a favourite charger of the Emperor gave him promotion as captain of the Foreign Guards, and Basil rose rapidly in the personal service of the Court. He soon obtained the extravagant favour of the scandalous Michael. The Emperor forced Basil to divorce his wife, to marry (officially and ostensibly) the Imperial mistress, but provided him with a real mistress, being one of the Emperor's own sisters. One of Basil's sons by his wife succeeded him on the throne, but was believed to be the child of Michael.

An alliance so extravagant between the Emperor regnant and his High Chamberlain could not long subsist without awakening the suspicions and jealousy of Bardas the real sovran in his nephew's name. Suspicion and jealousy at that Court meant intrigue and death, and Basil soon had Bardas slaughtered. Thereupon the miserable Michael made Basil his Co-Emperor, and he was officially crowned as such in Santa Sophia. But the buffoon Michael proceeded to greater lengths, and actually after a banquet at Basil's table arrayed an obscure courtier as a third Emperor. Basil saw that he could hesitate no longer.

Michael had invited him and his wife to dine in the Palace, and when the wretched creature was in his cups and retired to his bed, Basil and his fellow-conspirators rushed into the chamber, and hacked the Emperor to pieces. In the morning Basil I. with his official wife were duly crowned at Santa Sophia, and a new dynasty called the Basilian begins.

Basil, like Bardas, was a real ruler, and fully capable to direct the Empire in peace or in war. Both had been for years almost in the position of Viceroys; and being suspected, and in danger of being destroyed under that suspicion, they were forced to destroy their superiors, in self-defence as much as through ambition. Michael III. had become an intolerable tyrant of the worst oriental style. The imperial history concocted by Basil's grandson asserts that the Ministers and Senate "took counsel together and caused him to be slain by the Palace Guard."

The Basilian dynasty, like the other dynasties, opens with complex Palace conspiracies and murders; but it would seem that these had but slight and occasional effects on the general welfare of the Empire. The administration in Church and State, civil and military and ecclesiastical, continues to be carried on without confusion or break.

One of the most fascinating, and also one of the most instructive passages in Mediæval history, is the story of the long-drawn battle between the Papacy and the sovereigns of Europe from the ninth to the fifteenth century—from Leo III. to Julius II. At times a similar struggle went on at Constantinople on a far narrower stage, and with far less open violence, between the Eastern Roman Emperor and the Greek Patriarch. The stage was so much smaller because at Byzantium Emperor and Patriarch lived side by side, in the same capital city and in con-

tiguous palaces; and the struggle affected the nation outside the city in far less conspicuous and stormy ways, because it was usually effected by secret intrigues and palace revolutions, directly touching only the principal actors and their followers. But the secular conflict between Church and State—a conflict which still rages amongst us to-day—was perhaps all the more marked in that it passed in a concentrated area, and without extraneous complications.

The history of Photius, the encyclopædic scholar, and of Ignatius, the ascetic and domineering Patriarch, as told in Mr. Bury's sixth chapter, is of special interest. It reminds us how vast a store of ancient learning was being preserved in Constantinople in the ninth century—by one who was a rival of Western scholars of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries; how a proud Patriarch of Byzantium could prefigure by a long era the pretensions of a Hildebrand or an Innocent; how again the Greek culture, wealth, and civic organisation of an Amorian dynasty looked down with contempt on the barbarism and rudeness of Franks, Latins, and Saxons in the age of the Caroline Kings, Lombard Dukes, and the Kinglets of Wessex, about two or three generations after the melodramatic crowning of Charles at Christmas, 800 A.D.

They who believe that the Eastern Roman Empire was a mass of corruption and chaos may be astonished to learn the facts of the financial organisation as explained by Bury in his seventh chapter. Financial regularity and stability is a prominent test of superior civilisation. And we need not wonder at the pride of the Byzantines when they compared their budgets and their system of taxation with the rude and puny levies of the West. The professor calculates that the Imperial revenue from taxation in the ninth

century might amount to £125,000,000 of our money. Of this, about one-sixth came from the capital, which was known as the richest city in the world. The expenditure included army, navy, civil administration, religious foundations, public institutions, charities, and infirmaries, diplomatic donations, and the maintenance of a splendid and magnificent court. It is the parallel of Versailles or Madrid in the eighteenth century.

The Professor quotes a fine encomium from a German historian.

> "In the period of 800 years from Diocletian to Alexius Comnenus the Roman Government never found itself compelled to declare bankruptcy or stop payments. Neither the ancient nor the modern world can offer a complete parallel to this phenomenon. This prodigious stability of Roman financial policy therefore secured the 'byzant' its universal currency. On account of its full weight it passed with all the neighbouring nations as a valid medium of exchange. By her money Byzantium controlled both the civilised and the barbarian worlds."

In 856 A.D., fourteen years after the death of Theophilus, whose reign was famous for his lavish court and splendid buildings, his widow Theodora proved to the Senate that, under her own careful administration, the Treasury had a balance in reserve of gold equal in purchasing power to upwards of £20,000,000, besides 300 pounds of silver. And yet Theophilus is believed to have laid out £12,000,000 in his magnificent works. Let us guess what trifling sums in gold were likely to be found, in the middle of the ninth century, accumulated in the treasuries of Frankish, Saxon, Lombard, or Papal sovereigns.

Nor was the military and naval organisation of the

Eastern Empire less elaborate and modern than the economic system. Professor Bury very carefully works out the details of the army of the Amorian dynasty in its eleven Asiatic and its twelve European Themes, or Provinces, together with two naval Themes (or Commands). Each army corps was divided into brigades, battalions, and companies — the company being normally 200; the battalion 1000 to 3000; the brigade 5000, more or less. Each army corps largely consisted of cavalry, and the soldiers and officers had regular stations, duties, and pay. There were also four special regiments of household cavalry, to a great extent consisting of foreign mercenaries. The numbers naturally varied at different times and under different emperors. But in the ninth century we are told that each of these regiments was 6000 or 4000 strong. The sanitary arrangements were good. At Dorylaion there were warm baths from natural springs, with seven basins, each holding 1000 men breast high. There was also a corps of ambulance and medical staff. The regular army may be estimated for each side of the Empire at about 80,000, and the total cost of both may have been five millions of our money each by year.

The Navy was similarly organised in six fleets; and we hear of expeditions of 300 warships to Egypt and of 400 ships operating in Southern Italy.

Mr. Bury throws new light on the coronation of Charles by the Pope, and the relations of the Western Empire to Venetia and Northern Italy. To those who held the conventional contempt for the "Lower Empire," the desire to proclaim a Western Empire and to win the friendly attitude of the Golden Palace, and still more the idea of Charles marrying the widowed Empress Irene, may have appeared rather ceremonial by-play and not serious politics. Mr. Bury

shows in detail how much richer, more solid, better organised was the Empire on the Bosporus than the vast agglomeration of semi-civilised races temporarily united by the genius of Charlemagne. Rome recognised the incalculable prestige of the rulers who bore the name of Augustus. The courts of the Franks, and Lombards, and Burgundians well knew and admitted the legitimacy and sacro-sanctity of the real Imperator. And Charles, and his ministers and prelates, saw the importance of securing the secular title, and the potent authority it held over the minds of that age.

A most interesting and instructive chapter is the story of the gradual development of Venetia, *i.e.* of the whole lagoon district as it stood on the borders of the Western and Eastern Empires, and with Italian adroitness alternately played off one power against the other. The preponderant naval power of the East prevented the absorption of Venetia by the Lombards. And the desire of Charles to conciliate the Byzantine potentates, in order to obtain formal recognition of his title, enabled the refugee cities in the Lagoons to maintain themselves free and prosperous and outside the Carlovingian state. Thus by degrees the Rialto, before the middle of the ninth century, what we now know as Venice proper, gradually won a practical independence and a magnificent mercantile position. Venice, in fact, became, as the clearing house of the trade between the Greek and the Frank Empires, much what Constantinople had been for the trade between Asia and Europe.

In 812 A.D. formal treaties were signed and peace secured between the Eastern and the Western Emperors. Michael I. saluted Charles at Aachen as Basileus; and in 814 A.D., on the death of both emperors, Leo V. saluted Lewis the Pious by the same

title. "This transaction rendered valid retrospectively the Imperial election at Rome in 800 A.D.; and, interpreted strictly and logically, it involved the formal union of the two sovran realms. For the recognition of Charles as Basileus meant that he was the colleague of the emperor at Constantinople; they were both Roman emperors; but there could be, in theory, only one Roman Empire."

This had often been the rule in earlier centuries, and it was revived in the ninth. It was nominal and could not be worked in practice. Thus an *imperium Romanum* stretched from Armenia to the Atlantic. Constantinople gave it grudgingly and for a price. But it served the purposes of both.

Mr. Bury's concluding chapter on Art, Learning, and Education is specially instructive. He entirely disposes of the legend formed by Lebeau and Gibbon as to the immobility and confusion of the Eastern Empire. Even in art, whilst it abolished sculpture, it was not utterly lifeless, though but fragments of lay ornamentation have survived. In enamel and mosaic work it supplied Europe during the whole Middle Age period. Though poetry and all imaginative and creative literature was practically dormant, the maintenance of ancient learning and letters was an invaluable gift which we owe to Byzantium along with Baghdad. The modern world owes to these men "an inestimable debt for preserving the monuments of Greek literature." The manuscripts were not written for posterity, but to satisfy the large body of cultured and learned readers who from the first to the last Constantine maintained for eleven centuries the priceless traditions and products of the ancient world.

PART II

CENTENARIES, REVIEWS, AND MEMOIRS

CHAPTER XII

CHATHAM AND THE AMERICAN COLONIES *

THREE of the greatest men in all modern history were contemporaries together in the middle of the eighteenth century ; and each of them was a principal founder, or the second creator, of his own country—countries which are now the most powerful of modern States.

These three men of creative genius and commanding character towered above all their contemporaries, and exercised in their prime a truly imperial authority. They were all associated with each other in joint efforts and in personal admiration. All three were heroes, patriots, and martyrs to duty in the service of humanity and civilisation. All were great in war ; but never so great as amid defeat, disaster, and abandonment. Yet great in war as all were, they were greatest of all in their efforts to bring war to a close and to found a durable peace. Frederick the Great created the kingdom of Prussia. His ally in that work was William Pitt, Lord Chatham, who created the British Empire. George Washington was the father of the Great American Commonwealth, the

* An address to the American Circle on the Birthday of Washington (22nd February 1909).

early struggles of which against tyranny were heartily supported by Chatham.

Chatham was in a sense the link between Frederick and Washington, who had no direct relations with each other. The connection of Chatham and Washington was continuous and real. The relation of Chatham to the American Commonwealth is indeed twofold. He gave the American continent to our Saxon race, and not to the Latin tongue or name; and he nobly strove to free the United States from the tyranny of the British King. To-day the anniversary of Washington makes it meet to couple the name of the Father of the United States with that of the great Englishman who drove French and Spaniard from that continent and fought most resolutely to rescue our transatlantic fellow-citizens from the prejudices and the follies of a besotted sovereign and his misguided ministers.

The work of Pitt in respect to America is twofold; and I shall seek to keep these two aspects quite distinct, and to treat them in due order. In the first place, as William Pitt and as War Minister of George II., he was acting entirely against foreign nations, in concert with the king's colonial fellow-subjects, before any idea of rebellion or separation had entered the mind of any colonist. George Washington, indeed, was serving in the very campaign which Pitt had planned and organised; and the great city of Pittsburg bears witness to-day to the magnificent strategy by which the English statesman drove out the French and planted our race and language over the continent, from the great Lakes to the mouth of the Mississippi.

The second work was very different. No longer William Pitt, but Earl of Chatham, no longer the dominant minister of a victorious government and king, no longer in office or in power, no longer in health of

body or in peace of mind, without followers or hope or future, the wreck of a great man himself, and the mark of hostility and scorn to his sovereign and his peers—Chatham, in his decrepit old age, fought on alone in prophetic passion against the crimes of his tyrant master, in defence of the just rights of his countrymen in America, in denouncing it as "civil war," as the curse and ruin of his country. And in defence of an oppressed and calumniated people of three millions, he died at last in the midst of the disasters he had foreseen. And yet to me—and I think to you—this second career of his—utter failure as it seemed to be to those who heard him and saw him carried out to die—is truly the grandest, the purest, the most heroic. To me—and I think to you—Chatham with his racked limbs swathed in flannel, staggering through a speech in support of Franklin and Washington and the patriots of their time, is a grander man than Pitt, the organiser of victory, the terrible war minister who announced a new triumph in each despatch—before whom Spain and France trembled, whose return to power foreign statesmen prayed heaven to avert.

I proceed to deal with the first point, and to show how Pitt gave the North American continent to our race and tongue.

For a whole generation before the accession of Pitt to power, a fierce but intermittent struggle had been carried on between the three great maritime powers of Britain, France, and Spain for the trade and dominion of the vast North American continent. Commerce in those days of exclusive trade under the national flag meant the possession of colonies, and the three Western powers of Europe held the American soil in unequal proportions—France on the north and extreme west, England on the Atlantic seaboard as far as the

Alleghany mountains, and Spain in Florida and the West India Islands on the south. Of the three, France held the great strategical advantage of encircling the British colonies by her possession of Cape Breton, Acadia, Canada, and the great chain of lakes on the north, by her forts along the Ohio and Mississippi valleys, and her possession of the mouths and coast-line of the Mississippi and the Mobile rivers. Spain, though far weaker than Britain or France, was firmly planted in Florida, Central America, and the rich islands in the Gulf.

When Pitt became Minister at last, by the popular voice and his own transcendent eloquence, in spite of the jealousy of aristocratic factions and the fears of a hostile monarch, the condition of England and of the British colonies was indeed dark and ominous. France held the dominant position, for she could sweep right round our colonies over a line of at least 1500 miles. She had magnificent naval bases at Cape Breton, on the St. Lawrence river, lakes Champlain and Ontario, and she had fortresses in Louisbourg, Quebec, Montreal, Frontenac, Duquesne, St. François on the Ohio, and others. She had the vast range of Canada and the whole Mississippi valley on the north and west, and she led and subsidised the Indian tribes over that boundless area. The French fortresses were far superior to the British. France had superb soldiers and a hero of genius in the Marquis of Montcalm. And her colonial territories were not detached and independent, but under the direct control of an absolute monarch.

The British colonies lay on a long and narrow seaboard, in breadth never more than 300 miles from the Atlantic westward, and in New England hardly 200 miles across. They were continuous and not spread over such vast and separate areas as the French colonies, but, on the other hand, they were divided into thirteen

self-governed and not very cordial groups, with hardly any common American patriotism or sense of fellow-citizenship with each other. They were loyal subjects of King George and regarded Britain as their natural home and their lawful head and protector. Instead of the regular troops of King Louis, the British colonies for the most part were defended by an irregular and ill-equipped militia, which had nothing of an army except personal courage.

Mainly from these causes the condition of the British colonies in 1756 was disastrous. Their detached and ill-managed expeditions to break through the ring wrought round them by the organised strategy of the French generals had ended in defeat and ruin. George Washington saved the remnant of Braddock's force. Braddock was cut to pieces. Oswego on lake Ontario was captured; New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia were harried by savage Indians subsidised by France; and on all sides the British colonies seemed about to pass under the practical domination of the French. They were jealous and hostile, disorganised, and disheartened by a long series of disasters and disputes.

In December 1756 William Pitt became practically Prime Minister with almost absolute authority for war and diplomacy. Within four years he had made one of the most marvellous revolutions in all modern history. Great Britain had expanded into a World-Empire, and the whole of the North American continent had been secured in effect to the English race and tongue. Cape Breton and the great port and fortress of Louisbourg were taken. Quebec was captured, and the two French and English heroes fell almost side by side. Then Montreal fell, and the control of all Canada soon followed; the French ports along the Ohio and the Lakes became English, Fort Duquesne

became Pittsburg—and with it the command of the Western plains. By this marvellous series of combined strokes within four years it was finally decided—if I may repeat words of my own, which I am proud to find quoted by an American woman in a book issued by the "Colonial Dames" of America—"it was finally decided that the English language, common law, literature, and blood should be settled on the continent of America from the Atlantic to the Pacific, from the Arctic Ocean to the Gulf of Mexico."

This was the first great service to America, which justifies our remembrance of Chatham even on this day that is consecrated to the memory of Washington. For the details of this stupendous achievement I must refer you to two recent books, neither of which were issued, I regret to say, when I wrote my little sketch of Chatham's Life. The book I have just cited will give you a true insight into the marvellous knowledge of men and things that Pitt possessed, into his indefatigable power of work and concentration, into his grasp of details and his practical wisdom, foresight, and caution, which make him the peer of Frederick and of Washington. The book is the "*Correspondence of William Pitt* when Secretary of State with Colonial Governors and Military and Naval Commissioners in America, edited under the auspices of the National Society of the Colonial Dames of America by Gertrude Selwyn Kimball, 2 vols., 8vo, New York, Macmillan Company, 1906." Read those 127 letters of Pitt if you desire to understand how a great man thinks out, plans, and orders a vast and organic scheme which creates a mighty nation. Another essay based on contemporary documents in our own Record Office is by Mr. Herbert Hall, the learned director of the Royal Historical Society. His paper is to be found in the *American Historical Review* of 1901.

For the politics and the strategy of this amazing epoch we may turn to another book—*England and the Seven Years' War, a Study of Combined Strategy*, by Julian Corbett, LL.M., with maps and plans, 2 vols. 8vo, Longmans, 1907. Here we shall find, in conjunction with Captain Mahan's *Sea Power*, a scientific account of the vast combination of military and naval strategy on a world-wide scale which gives us the measure of Chatham's genius. When we consider the enormous range of these expeditions over the face of the planet, the multiplicity and variety of them, their combination of joint armaments by sea and by land, of maritime blockade and long marches, storming parties both by sea and by land—the schemes of Chatham are on a scale more elaborate than any of Frederick or of Washington—indeed they surpass in area even those of Napoleon—and in English history can only be compared with those of Cromwell, which were on a smaller and less successful scale.

I turn now to the second point where the United States owe to Chatham a deep debt of reverence and affection—I mean his heroic efforts to stem the torrent of folly and injustice in the British Crown and Government, and to defend the just claims of the American colonies to self-government and freedom. This is a very different picture from that of the triumphant statesman we have been contemplating. No longer in power, but without followers or party, almost without friends or help, Chatham, for some ten years, stoutly resisted the oppressive policy of George III. and Lord North.

The story has been often told, and I do not think it has ever been summed up in words more eloquent than those of one who is at once an experienced statesman and a brilliant historian—Sir George Trevelyan, a former Secretary for Ireland, the nephew of

Macaulay — of a family which for at least three generations has served the State. In Trevelyan's monumental history of the *American Revolution* I read this noble panegyric:—

> "With his broad heart, his swift perception, and his capacious intellect, Chatham knew America, and he loved her; and he was known and loved by her in return. He had done more for her than any ruler had done for any country since William the Silent saved and made Holland; and she repaid him with a true loyalty. When the evil day came, it was to Chatham that she looked for the good offices which might avert an appeal to arms. When hostilities had broken out, she fixed on him her hopes for an honourable peace. And when he died—in the very act of confessing her wrongs, though of repudiating and condemning the establishment of that national independence on which her own mind was irrevocably set—she refused to allow that she had anything to forgive him, and she mourned for him as a father of her people."

On the first day of the Session of 1774, Chatham moved in the House of Lords to withdraw British troops from Boston. He denounced the plan of trying to tax America. "This country," he said, "has no right under heaven to tax America." When the famous riot about the tea-chests took place in Boston harbour, he made a grand speech denouncing the tea tax as "contrary to all the principles of justice and civil policy." "The day is not far distant," he said again, "when America may vie with these kingdoms not only in arms, but in arts also. It is an established fact that the principal towns of America are learned and polite,

and understand the constitution of the Empire as well as the noble lords who are now in office."

"The cause of America was the cause of all Irishmen, Catholic and Protestant, and of all true Liberals in England—*i.e.* of every man who is not a friend to arbitrary power." "The colonists were our countrymen, and if we persisted in treating them as aliens and foes, the consequences were incalculable. It was civil war."

What words of wisdom and of prophetic genius!

Chatham was in close touch with Franklin, the envoy to England and France of the United States. He boldly introduced him into the House of Lords, defended him there when attacked, and consulted him as to the Bill of reconciliation and settlement that he proposed. He said in Parliament, "If I were minister I would not hesitate to call in Franklin—a man whom all Europe holds in estimation for his knowledge and wisdom."

Oh! that Chatham could have retained his health. His magnificent outbursts of patriotism and genius were only in the occasional hours of relief from his cruel and paralysing malady. Had Chatham been able to return to power, to break down the foolish obstinacy of King George and his viziers—if he could have brought in Burke, and with him could have made a settlement with Franklin and Washington — how different would the history of the eighteenth century have been. Britain and the United States would have been in brotherhood and alliance—in a harmony which it has needed nearly a century and a half to cement. It was not to be.

Again, Chatham told the Lords that the resolutions and addresses of Congress at Philadelphia "for solidity of reasoning, force of sagacity, and wisdom of conclusion under such a complication of difficulties, were

surpassed by no body of men in any age or nation." "The colonists," he thundered, "are our compatriots. I trust that freemen in England do not desire to see three million Englishmen slaves in America."

He took a step of extraordinary audacity and sacrifice. His eldest son and heir, Lord Pitt, was in the military service, and he had taken care to place his beloved son on the staff of his own friend, General Carleton, who was in command in Massachusetts. Chatham was intensely proud of his heir, and proud of the army in which he had been an officer, proudest of all of the honour of his house and his country. But he could not bear to think of his boy fighting in an unholy war. In 1776, as hostilities became continuous and bitter, Chatham faced the contempt and indignation of soldiers and politicians and wrote to the General that "from his fixed opinion with regard to the continuance of the unhappy war with our fellow-subjects of America, he will withdraw his son from such a service." And the young Lord Pitt had to resign and return home.

We can imagine what courage, what a sense of duty, what a bitter sacrifice it must have been to a former Minister publicly to expose his son and heir to the humiliation of refusing to face the enemies of his king and country. I have myself known a father submitted to the same trial. During our own unhappy Boer war, a friend of mine, whose whole life and fortune belonged to the South African colony, who had given help, advice, and a large slice of his own estate to the Capetown Colony, whose own brothers were serving the Boer forces, found that his two sons were serving with the British army. My friend suffered in silence. He had not the passionate indignation which nerved Chatham to sacrifice his son.

Before the war became declared, Chatham in 1774

had written to the Sheriff in London: "What infatuation and cruelty to accelerate the sad moment of war! Every step in America of our government seems calculated to drive the Americans into open resistance, vainly hoping to crush the spirit of liberty in that vast continent at one successful blow; but millions must perish there before the seeds of freedom will cease to grow and spread in so favourable a soil; and in the meantime devoted England herself must sink under the ruins of her own foolish and inhuman system of destruction." "I fear the bond between us and America will be cut off for ever!"

Has that bond been cut off for ever? Your presence here to-day gives the answer—No! But it has taken nearly a century and a half to rejoin the links in the chain that binds together the Anglo-Saxon race. Well! time does justice at last to the honest and the true—for all that they disappear under neglect and ingratitude. There is a pathetic monument of Chatham still standing in its defacement and decay which seems to me an emblem of his heroic soul.

There stands still in Charlestown the classical monument erected to William Pitt by the Commons of South Carolina in 1769. The inscription records that it was raised "in grateful memory of his services to America," and they add that "time shall sooner destroy the marble statue of the hero than it shall erase from their minds their just sense of his patriotic virtues."

The statue stands still erect, but it is defaced and mutilated—for a British fleet bombarding Charlestown struck it with cannon balls and carried away the outstretched arms of the figure. What an emblem of a great life! One hundred and forty years ago the Commons of an American State expressed in marble their grateful memory of an English statesman. His

own countrymen in a spirit of infatuated tyranny mutilated that figure just as they opposed and maligned him in his life. But now at last Americans and Englishmen join hands in two continents to rehearse the memory of the patriotism and the virtues of their two national heroes—Washington and Chatham—as the two creators of their respective states, and certainly the two greatest men of their nation and their age.

CHAPTER XIII

LORD ROSEBERY'S 'CHATHAM' *

THIS is a book full of original research, of historical judgments, of brilliant eloquence and wit. Students of the eighteenth century will find it a mine of new MSS. memoirs; historians will find it a gallery of life-like portraits; and the general reader will be delighted with a coruscation of epigrams.

History is best written by those who have made history or those who, through a long life, have been at the making of history. No one is so well equipped to unravel the mysteries of a great Prime Minister's career as a statesman who has served in that office himself. Lord Rosebery, whose own mother came of the historic family closely allied to that of Chatham, has had access to the private MSS. of many houses that were not open to humbler scribes. And no man is so well fitted to add a new volume to Horace Walpole's inexhaustible collection of speaking mezzotints as our greatest living master of incisive speech. Accordingly scholars, historians, and the public have looked forward to this volume with lively expectation—and none of these will be disappointed.

Be it understood that this book is no Life of Chatham

* *Chatham: His Early Life and Connections*, by Lord Rosebery. London, Arthur L. Humphreys.

—certainly not of his great Ministry. It is his early life, largely his personal life, down to the year 1756, and it ceases when Pitt became a mighty power in the modern history of Europe and of the world. It is mainly occupied in penetrating the mysterious veil which Pitt chose to throw round his inner soul. It casts new light upon "the great Commoner's" boyhood, youth, and desperate struggles to force his way to power. But it is rather tantalising to find the fascinating story break off like an Arabian Night tale just as the hero is about to enter on his dazzling career. Indeed, one may wonder why the book is called "Chatham," seeing that it ends ten years before Pitt accepted a title. It must be that this masterly study is to be the first instalment of a complete "Life of Chatham," which no one but Lord Rosebery is qualified to give us. He tells us in the Preface that the Life of Chatham "never can be written at all." He now shows us that it can be written—and we feel sure that it will be written—and be written by him, who, by birth, experience, subtle insight, and literary gift combines all the qualifications for the task.

Our time seems peculiarly rich in personal revelations of the actors on the historic stage. We have just had the Letters and Diaries of Queen Victoria, the "early life" of Disraeli, the domestic life of Lord and Lady Russell, and now the monumental Life of Gladstone has been supplemented by his religious experiences and ideas. Bismarck, Gambetta, Cavour continue to furnish endless biographical studies. And every day we seem to get closer to the inner life of the world's great men—in Lord Rosebery's phrase, "to realise the humanity of the superhuman being."

We cannot accept Lord Rosebery's view that "the real man," William Pitt, is not known to us, never can be known. He has given us a most living portrait

of the man. Few men in our history stand out for us more distinctly, and that in Pitt's abnormal idiosyncrasy, and not merely in his outward show. Lord Rosebery has heightened the colours and deepened the shadows of that marvellous superman, whose passion and whose silence, whose powers and whose impotence bewildered his age and enthral our own. But the essential features that have long been known are not altered. This book finally reveals whatever mystery remained unprobed. It shows us how a man of supreme genius and heroic soul, consumed with self-will and pride, was racked by hereditary disease of body and mind, so that in his triumphs and in his ruin he remained an abnormal portent in the annals of mankind. When we comprehend "the volcanic character" and the congenital diseases of "these truculent Pitts," when we unloose the tragic mask and the scenic buskin wherein this lonely giant chose to be seen of men, then Chatham becomes to us as visible and as real as Cromwell, Washington, or Napoleon.

A special advantage of this book is that Lord Rosebery has had access to the unpublished Family Memoir compiled in 1781 by the first Lord Camelford, Chatham's nephew, favourite, and once his intended heir. He is "the dear child" to whom Pitt wrote the thoughtful and affectionate "Letters" published in 1804. Lord Rosebery explains why the favourite nephew took at last "a cordial aversion" to his famous uncle, and wrote for his own son a character of the dead statesman with "aversion in every sentence," and full of "violent prejudice." And yet, with this bitterly hostile record before him, Lord Rosebery finds little that is to Pitt's dishonour, whilst it abundantly displays the strange quarrelsome brood of the Pitt family. From the fierce old tyrant, "the Governor," the black diamond from whom they

all sprung, down to the riotous, rowdy, half-crazy second Lord Camelford, Chatham's great-nephew, the family had "that haughty, impossible, anomalous character, distempered at times beyond the confines of reason." Chatham stands out as the sweetest, most generous, and, apart from actual seizure, the most sane of that strange race.

What is quite new are these early letters of Pitt as a boy, as youth, as traveller, as tepid lover, his affection poured out to his wild and at last crazy sister Ann, whom he loved well, and quarrelled with so hotly, and many letters to his political friends or enemies. We see Pitt first the generous and well-behaved youth, though a very poor penman, and then we see him in his battles and cabals, pompous, cumbrous, obscure, and fierce. It is a psychologic curiosity that our greatest orator was one of our worst writers. Cicero, Burke—Lord Rosebery himself—prove that there is no necessary antagonism between the two arts. But Chatham, ever grand, and even grandiose when on his legs, was stiff, tame, and tedious with a pen in his hand.

The only parts of Lord Rosebery's book which have no life are those written by Chatham himself. To parody a famous epigram, we may say to a reader—

> Accept a miracle in place of wit,
> See some dull pages by Lord Rosebery writ!

Of course it was only Lord Rosebery's fountain pen —or his copying machine. Chatham on paper is a curious mixture of pomp and commonplace. But too much has been made of his poor style. I read all these new letters and all the published letters, and I find in their heavy lines a cultured, powerful mind, a generous, warm, and noble spirit.

It must not be supposed that this book is entirely occupied with the "early life" of Chatham—or, indeed, solely with him. It is full of telling portraits or "characters" of all the leading personages, as brilliant and sometimes almost as cruel as those painted by Horace Walpole. But, not being contemporary, and so void of prejudice, and also being drawn from various sources, both published and manuscript, they are more balanced and without the spite—yet with all the spice—of the acid Orford. A closer analogy is that with the characters drawn by Macaulay in his *Essays* and his *History*, and they read as if the famous Whig historian had been the model.

Chapter viii., pp. 192-201, is taken up with an estimate of George II., "the best of the Georges"—at least as a king. This is as masterly a judgment as it is brilliant as a picture. Newcastle has often been described "the most hardened of political jobbers," but the real man is painted in pp. 173-175 :—

> Newcastle has long been a byeword; he was so all through his protracted public life: and he has remained in history a synonym for a certain jobbing and fussing incapacity. . . . His ambition, such as it was, had indeed an elastic but stubborn tenacity; the ties of blood, friendship, or principle availed nothing against it. His industry, such as it was, is attested by his long tenure of office and the vast mass of his correspondence. His disinterestedness, such as it was, is proved by his leaving public life £300,000 poorer than he entered it. . . . To hold a crowded levee of place-hunters, ecclesiastical and temporal, to thread his way about it coaxing, fawning, and slobbering, embracing and even kissing, promising and paying all with the base coin of cozenage—this was Newcastle's paradise. But it answered. It made him necessary to his party, and therefore necessary to those who would govern the country; for government was restricted to his party. So all

statesmen in turn scorned and employed him. "His name," said Walpole, "is perfidy." But perfidy paid, and Walpole kept him to the end.

Can we wonder that Lord Rosebery has striven so long to reform the House of Lords?

Admirable, too, is the account of the Grenville "connection," the "cousinhood," the "Boy Patriots," by whom Pitt "was adopted as one of the brotherhood and choked in their embraces"; "they were not only a brotherhood, but a confraternity . . . they were a political company of Jesus — who exercised so singular and so baleful an influence on Pitt."

There are just and life-like portraits of Carteret, Chesterfield, Walpole, Pulteney, Pelham, Lyttelton, Mansfield, Hardwicke, and all the minor satellites of the Walpole and Newcastle Ministries. But the most effective is the character of Henry Fox, first Lord Holland. It is also the most new, and drawn from original sources, for Lord Rosebery has had the privilege of inspecting the Holland House MSS. "Fox was everything that Pitt was not. He had the cordial manner, the veneer at least of good fellowship, the frankness savouring of cynicism, which make for an eminently serviceable sort of Parliamentary popularity." "But Fox had one incurable flaw which was wholly wanting in Pitt; his aims were base and material. . . . And besides money he had another weakness. He longed to be a lord. . . . He earned and he received his peerage. But he had also earned a detestation rarely accorded in England to a statesman." All this was a century and a half ago; but the titles remain, the descendants survive, the traditions, the memories, the habits are not extinct. Above all, the House is still there with the old powers, the old claims, unreformed, even if curtailed.

Derby, Disraeli, Gladstone, and Salisbury long ago proved that a Prime Minister with a reputation as an orator can write. And this book will show that Lord Rosebery can write at least as well as he can speak. The book abounds in those mordant strokes which flash out in his speeches. The German princelets who imitated Versailles: the Hanoverians taken as odious necessities to keep out a still more odious Romanist dynasty; Walpole's only monument was "the void left by his death"; a peerage is now the impediment, if not the disqualification, for office; Chatham's "principal occupation was the gout"; "the loves of statesmen, often ardent, and always precarious"; his own retirement "is the common cant of a Minister"; the parasites in politics who are always mistrusted and constantly taken into confidence; the Parliamentary Zoroastrians who worship the rising sun; like Professor Owen, we must reconstruct Pitt's speeches out of the poor bones we have; the promising young men who fail to mature. We can almost hear these touches as if they dropped from the platform to a crowded hall.

The volume is sumptuously issued, in the best style of Mr. Arthur L. Humphreys, as befits the subject and the author. It has a good index (save and except that it puts George III. for George II.); but the twenty-two chapters have no distinct heading; there is no Table of Contents at all, no head-line to distinguish the chapters; and it is not easy to find one's way about it, as it runs on without visible break or label. "Connections" in the title means, of course, political associates, not family relations, and thus justifies the elaborate studies of so many contemporaries of Chatham. But why "Chatham," when the typical story of the earldom is not mentioned, and the book does not reach Chatham at all? And

why "Lord Rosebery" on the title-page? I wonder Mr. Humphreys did not put "Mr. Rosebery," as the lordship was dropped at the London County Council. The books of the Earl of Derby and the Earl of Beaconsfield have the formal, and not the conversational, title on their front.

The book is no regular biography. It is a collection of studies, of vignettes, copies of unpublished documents, and commentaries thereon, and lays no claim to be a work of art. Neither chronological order nor unity of topic are regarded as necessary. Persons die and are buried in one chapter, and are quite alive again in the next. The book ends at 1756, but persons and things are mentioned after that date.

A more serious question will be asked by those who love Chatham as a man and revere his great name. *Cui bono*—whose honour is enhanced by tales of the squalid and truculent brood of Pitts to whom the first chapter is devoted? Pitt's own letters to his relations do him no discredit; they are kindly, manly, and sensible, but they are clumsy and dull. The vile crew with whom Pitt had to fight, their cabals, and their treacheries make up a gruesome picture. And Pitt was of his age and his fellows. Lord Rosebery shows him "petulant, factious, hungry, bitter." At last he bursts his trammels—and there his biographer stops!

His marriage, too, "marks a new ascent in Pitt's career; love seemed to have transformed him; always powerful and eloquent, he became sublime." Yet here, just as Pitt obtains a happy and beautiful home, just as he is about "to inspire the policy of the world," the curtain drops. No! Lord Rosebery has given us the "factious, hungry, bitter" life of William Pitt. He must go on, and give us the noble

life of Chatham. This book is but Volume the First.

In his Preface, which is as fine in psychological insight as it is incisive and epigrammatic in expression, Lord Rosebery puzzled us all by bluntly asserting that the complete life of Chatham "never has been written and never can be written," and he adds that he insists on this in spite of all the numerous biographers from Thackeray to von Ruville. To the ordinary student of history it would certainly appear that we know the life of Chatham even better than we know that of other public men of the time—say of Marlborough, Walpole, Chesterfield, Fox, or Burke. We know him better indeed, because he stands out in a more personal way as the direct leader of one of the most brilliant periods of English history. What, then, does Lord Rosebery mean? There is a sense in which these words are exactly true.

In all that concerns Chatham's relation to the general history of our country we now know all that we need to know. After von Ruville's researches we may rest satisfied that there is nothing of serious importance to discover. The public, political life of Chatham is exhaustively written in many books, and latest of all in Sir George Trevelyan's last volume. What Lord Rosebery means is that from the time of his undertaking responsible office, Chatham, the man, in his inner thoughts and nature, is not known and never can be known, from want of material. This is perfectly true. We never shall know Chatham and his soul's history as we know the personal life of Johnson or of Fox, or of Byron or Shelley. But we know Chatham quite as well as we know Richelieu or Turgot, or William Pitt or Sir Robert Peel. Why need we know more?

In a brilliant and most enlightening passage of his

Preface, Lord Rosebery has summed up the life of Chatham with Tacitean conciseness :—

> Born of a turbulent stock, he is crippled by gout at Eton and Oxford, then launched into a cavalry regiment, and then into Parliament. For eight years he is groom-in-waiting to a prince. Then he holds subordinate office for nine years more. Then he suddenly flashes out, not as a royal attendant or minor placeman, but as the people's darling and the champion of the country. In obscure positions he has become the first man in Britain, which he now rules absolutely for four years in a continual blaze of triumph. Then he is sacrificed to an intrigue, but remains the supreme statesman of his country for five years more. Then he becomes Prime Minister amid general acclamation ; but in an instant he shatters his own power, and retires, distempered, if not mad, into a cell. At last he divests himself of office, and recovers his reason ; he lives for nine years more, a lonely, sublime figure, but awful to the last, an incalculable force. He dies, practically, in public, as he would have wished ; and the nation, hoping against hope, pins its faith in him to the hour of death.

This is the true story of Chatham in a nutshell, and to fill up and colour this portrait we have ample matter in the various histories of England and the *Lives* of Chatham. But from the time when this proud, fierce, and distempered spirit began to play a dominant part on the stage of the world's politics, in sight of men in all four continents, we lack first-hand information of the inner workings of this man's mind, of his hopes, sorrows, yearnings, and despair. He kept all this to himself as many a great soul has done. He wrote formal, and perhaps guarded letters. He chose to wrap himself in a certain mystery, with more or less of a tragic pose. He never talked freely of himself to any intimate, if he had any outside his

family ; or if he ever did talk, almost nothing is recorded. During his active official life, he chose to show nothing but his official self. It is possible that he held his purely personal life under rigid control. During his non-official life, after laying down power, he was a confirmed invalid, and for long spells of his intermittent and obscure disease he was a man not master of himself, of his brain, of his will. For these reasons, of the man Chatham in his later career we know little. And so Lord Rosebery groans that however interesting and dramatic such a knowledge would be, we have nothing "to reveal the real man."

But why need we know more? Why pry into the private life of an essentially public man? In the case of a poet, or a divine, or a moralist, there may be more reason to know "the real man." We would give many of his plays, as Lord Rosebery suggests, to know more of Shakespeare as a man, in his private meditations and habits. The life of Milton, or of Goethe, or of Rousseau, or of Carlyle, is both interesting and important ; and that, because their written thoughts are thereby expanded or qualified. But why need we know the habits and musings of statesmen whose works are written only in the annals of nations? Their policy and their achievements in deeds are their works. Perhaps the less we know of Frederick II., or of Napoleon, or of Bismarck in their homes, in their foibles and weaknesses, the better. The privacies of Wellington, or of Peel, or of Palmerston are no concern of ours.

So far as Chatham's personality really concerns us, Lord Rosebery has given us an adequate account of "the real man." And throughout his book we have some of his happiest apophthegms and some of his truest estimates. "He had to herd with political jobbers ; he had to serve intriguing kinsfolk ; he had

to cringe to unworthy Kings and the mistresses of Kings; he is flouted and insulted by a puppet Whig like Rockingham. Despite all this he bequeaths the most illustrious name in our political history."

Lord Rosebery is particularly happy in tracing the family inheritance of this "formidable race," or what he calls "the volcanic character of these truculent Pitts," at least down from the time of Diamond Pitt, the grandfather. But the volcanic character soon exhausted itself when mingled with the blood of the Stanhopes. There was nothing volcanic in the second Lord Chatham nor indeed in Chatham's second son; and though Lady Hester Stanhope had no small share of the virus, the Stanhopes of the nineteenth century were an eminently practical and judicious race.

Lord Rosebery uses—indeed over-emphasises—"the priceless document" written by Lord Camelford for his son, another scion of "that strange cockatrice brood of Pitts." The son for whom this document was written as a warning had "a turbulent, rakehelly, demented existence." He revived the pranks of the Mohawks, and "riots were the breath of his nostrils," until he was killed in a duel at the age of twenty-nine. Except to show the madness in the family, we need hear no more of the male and female Pitts unless it be "to trace to their source the germs of that haughty, impossible, anomalous character, distempered at times beyond the confines of reason, which made William so difficult to calculate or comprehend."

Lord Rosebery has completely explained the bond, the force, and the vice of the famous cousinhood of Grenvilles—how Pitt became brother-in-law and was "adopted as one of the brotherhood and choked in their embraces—from this mortal entanglement he emancipated himself too late." One of the most admirable vignettes is that of Walpole—*un faux bonhomme*—

whose bluff exterior concealed a jealousy of power "passing the jealousy of woman and the ruthless vindictiveness of a Red Indian." "Opposition or rivalry he crushed with the relentless spirit of Peter the Great."

The portrait of Newcastle is equally life-like and equally just.

But, after all these entertaining anecdotes and the serio-comic scenes of Georgian politics, we come back to the "real Chatham," which is not the hero struggling with incapacities and perversities, with fraud and falsehood, but the statesman who created the Empire. Lord Rosebery closes a book far too soon, a book to be one day resumed and continued as is Trevelyan's *Fox*, with a fine and just sentiment which tells us all that is essential of Chatham :—

"We have seen him petulant, factious, hungry, bitter. And yet all the time we have felt that there was always something in him different in quality from his fellow-politicians, that there was an imprisoned spirit within him struggling for freedom and scope. . . . Britain is richer for his life. He bequeaths a tradition, he bequeaths a son ; and when men think of duty and achievement they look to one or the other. It will be an ill day for their country when either is forgotten."

CHAPTER XIV

VON RUVILLE'S 'CHATHAM'*

In preceding essays I have shown but scanty honour for the ponderous form of histories and biographies, weighted with "documents" and somniferous with irrelevant details which obscure and confuse our real knowledge of an age and, in effect, blurr and caricature our understanding of the real man. By over-stating and then misrepresenting an interminable series of trifles they bury the central story under a heap of pretended "new facts" and "unpublished manuscripts," or they falsify the portrait of a great man by spiteful insinuations spoken or written by a personal enemy, or ingeniously improvised by the editor's acumen. These are the men who, before Carlyle and Gardiner, in their likenesses of Cromwell, emphasised the protuberance of the wart on his brow and deepened the ruddy colour of his nose.

A conspicuous example of this degradation of the biographer's art may be seen in von Ruville's *Chatham*. In some 1250 pages octavo, a German archivist has undertaken to give us at last "the real Chatham." These huge volumes contain an immense amount of documentary evidence about Chatham and his con-

* *William Pitt, Earl of Chatham*, by Albert von Ruville (English translation, 3 vols. 8vo, 1907).

temporaries over the seventy years, 1708-1778. It is the result of rare industry, accuracy, and a meticulous anxiety to reach the truth of the most insignificant incident, and to record the utterance of the most casual opinion. For those who feel it a duty to themselves and their country to study every paper that may have passed between public men :—why Newcastle behaved like a tricksy booby, or what was behind Bute's petty intrigue, the labours of von Ruville may give some fresh information. But to those to whom every turn in the wrigglings of British politicians in the Georgian times is not a matter of supreme interest, the new discoveries in the Record Office and private muniment rooms are simply waste paper. Far from adding to our solid knowledge of European history, they blind us with scribbled stuff and stun us with a Babel of confused recriminations. They tend to deaden historical knowledge. And when it comes, as in this case, to cover with distorting blots the living portraiture of a hero, to insinuate mean motives against a man of lofty soul, to reduce his intellect to narrow and ordinary limits—then the labour of the most industrious biographer ends in being an active nuisance and not merely the blunder of a pedant.

Von Ruville opens his book with a pretentious paragraph which I quote as a monument of perverse misconception.

> "The subject of our narrative rises amid the history of England as a rock, mighty and strong, not, however, opposing the course of development, or directing the stream of progress into new channels, a type of character often to be found in English history, but rather as a dominating landmark, weather-worn on either side by the nature of preceding and subsequent periods, and yet forming a self-contained and uniform whole." The

historian adds that Chatham contributed to the progress of the nation, "although no actual change of natural development was due to him."

It would not be easy to find words which could better express what is the exact contrary of the real truth. This passage condemns the whole book as a learned blunder.

Every word in this exordium is wrong. How comic to describe Chatham as "a rock"—one of the most torrential forces in our history—a man of impulse, violence, and new inspiration, a statesman who continually flung aside party, professions, obstacles, who ever hurled himself into fresh adventures, and was ever devising novel combinations. A rock indeed! One might as well call Julius Cæsar, Peter the Czar, Frederick of Prussia, or Mirabeau a "rock."

It seems that English history has often shown a type of character "opposing the course of development," or one "directing the stream of progress into new channels"—but Chatham, we are told, is not one of these numerous English politicians; he is neither a Strafford nor a Cromwell, nor a Pitt nor a Burke. He is a "rock." The truth is that in different ways, and at various times, Chatham was eminently one who opposed the course of development to autocracy, and also one who directed the stream of progress into the new channels of an oversea Empire. Chatham, along with Walpole, was the greatest of those who substituted a Parliamentary for a monarchic system of government. And he was not only the greatest, but the sole founder of the British Empire. And yet to this German pedant Chatham is a "landmark"—one, it seems, who stood between two periods but neither formed nor represented either period. Can the misreading of history go beyond this?

Chatham, says von Ruville, is a "landmark,

weather-worn on either side by the nature of preceding and subsequent periods"—that is, apparently, but slightly affected by the political movements before him nor much affecting those after him. If Chatham is in any sense a landmark, it is that he marks the close of an era of dynastic and cabinet despotism and opens an era of government by the House of Commons which his son established. But he did this not by being a "rock" or "a dominating landmark," but by being a dominant force which, during his time of health and ascendancy, King, Cabinets, and magnates were impotent to resist. In the hands of the two Georges and their favourites, the government of England bid fair to settle into that of the French Louis. Chatham was the one man who, through the House of Commons and the nation, could defy the tendency to court autocracy.

On the other hand, he did direct the course of progress into new channels by creating an Empire over seas in four continents. He did develop in the most conspicuous degree the naval ascendancy of Britain, and by his American, Indian, and African conquests he changed the whole character of English history and the national ideals of our people. He is really the most direct creator of "Greater Britain" of any name in our history. Neither the Plantagenet kings, nor Burleigh, nor Marlborough, nor Pitt, nor Wellington did so much to make a new England as did Chatham. Even Cromwell did this in a way far more indirect and partial. The only creators of Britain who can be compared with Chatham are Alfred the Conqueror, Edward I., and the Long Parliament statesmen and soldiers. And of all Englishmen, down from Tudor times until our own, Chatham was the man who made the most extensive, the most rapid, and the most decisive change in the destinies of Britain.

By his own piercing genius and his tremendous will, this rock, this landmark did all this. We do not think of Richelieu, Peter, or Frederick, or Napoleon as "rocks." Yet these are the statesmen whose work is best compared with Chatham's.

The most discreditable part of von Ruville's book is the attempt to belittle the moral character of Chatham by mean insinuations based on paltry details which are perversely misread. Thus Chatham's bad health is said to be caused in part by the hereditary gout, but partly by intemperance and even immoralities in early life, either at Oxford or during his continental travels. For this insulting and gratuitous suggestion there is not a word of evidence. But our author finds it in "revelations" contained in letters to his nephew Thomas, whom he warns not to give way to indolence or any vicious courses in the fine letters which have been separately printed. So if an elderly uncle writes goody-goody letters to his nephew at college, we are to assume that the uncle really left the University without taking a degree in consequence of his own vices.

Another curious fact comes out from these letters to Thomas Pitt, the future Lord Camelford. Pitt's religion, at least at first, was "principally ethical"; he failed "to grasp the essence of Christian Doctrine, the redemption, and spiritual communion with God, which is the only source of true Christian morality; to this an intellectual system of ethics is related like the shadow to the object which casts it"; "he did not possess the spiritual confidence," etc. Chatham must have undergone "the change which is effected in the inner man by conversion or regeneration," etc. Now nothing comes out more clearly from the voluminous *Correspondence* as published than that Chatham all through his life was a simple, sincere, manly Christian believer, as free from bare conventional

orthodoxy, or agnostic ethicism, as he was free from fanatical Calvinism. Yet this Lutheran historian speaks of him as if he were a Baptist expounder of personal salvation by faith.

Nothing, again, is more certain than Chatham's genuine hatred of political corruption and his determination to suppress it whatever it cost him personally. But to this foreign unmasker of the "real Chatham" "in this, as in all cases, his objects were eminently practical and selfish," he thought that the path to success was "a lofty and disinterested attitude upon sordid questions of ways and means." So, Chatham was a Pecksniff who traded on the "appearance of high moral character." When Chatham refused to avail himself of the traditional practice of making a profit out of the sums in the paymaster's office, or of receiving a commission on granting subsidies to foreign governments, this scrupulous honesty was not sincere virtue at all, von Ruville declares, but a part of Chatham's art to curry favour with the public by parading his incorruptibility. Always a stage-player in the nation's eye, he was now able to pose in the character of the "inexorable Fabricius."

A more monstrous charge of venal treachery is that which pervades von Ruville's book when he tries to prove that Chatham's political action was inspired by his expectation of a legacy from Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough. As the great Earl of Chesterfield was included with Pitt in her will, it seems ridiculous to suppose that either of them were bought by pecuniary bequests. The charge is a rank insinuation worthy of a party pamphlet and unworthy of serious refutation. And a similar charge of political tergiversation is again urged in the matter of Sir William Pynsent's noble gift to the statesman whom he and his west-country neighbours held in honour and trust.

A comic point of the foreign biography is that Chatham's celebrated power as an orator depended on physical—not at all on intellectual resources. His voice, look, and theatrical tricks produced an impression, however barren were his arguments and vapid his warnings and denunciations. Chatham, we are now told on the authority of a great specialist in documentary evidence, was "especially deficient in depth of thought and clearness of perception." His arguments were borrowed from others: his intellect and his knowledge were far inferior to his energy and will. As an administrator he was a failure. His ascendancy was due to his imposing force as a keen critic and debater. Everything we find in contemporary reports proves that the very contrary of all this is true. Such is the verdict of Research as expounded in the latest official method as "made in Germany."

Not only was Chatham's oratory a thin, borrowed, and theatrical affair, but, instead of being the self-willed despot he was thought to be, he was really "the tool of others." When he acts with his political friends Chatham is "a tool." But what is even worse, he is the hireling of a spiteful woman. The real key to an important part of Chatham's political conduct is now revealed by "contemporary documents" and penetrative Research. The great, the haughty, the domineering Chatham became "dependent upon the old Duchess" of Marlborough. His action in Parliament, his speeches, his silences were prompted by his hopes of succeeding to this vicious old harridan's money. Chatham, alas, like Fielding's Tom Jones became the "kept man" of an ill-natured beldame—not, of course, to serve her lust, but to glut her hatred of a minister who had excluded her from St. James's Park, and to ventilate her spite in public debate.

When at last Chatham comes into power (vol. ii.), it was by his "mob-oratory," and his clever way of presenting as infallible his own very doubtful schemes. Chatham, in fact, was the real demagogue—the masses are incapable of judgment—it mattered not to them what were his measures, nor how far he broke with all his former principles. All they asked was that the new man should give them some success ; the different classes and interests, merchants, clergy, soldiers, and sailors, all hoped to get something for themselves out of the favourite demagogue. Cleon was to bring back the Spartans. Strange to relate, Cleon did bring back the Spartans to Athens. History, as they say, repeats itself. And demagogues do have their triumphs—for an hour.

The more trustworthy parts of von Ruville's book will be found in his third volume when he is treating of Chatham's second ministry, of his title, and reasons for retiring to the House of Lords, his mysterious illness, and his own domestic life. In all these the Prussian archivist is accurately informed, and may be read with profit. In the unclouded happiness of his marriage it would be difficult to go wrong. It may be that the new biographer adds almost nothing which is not already common knowledge. But it is well to have British judgments confirmed by independent testimony. The pathetic story of Chatham's long-drawn failure under the pressure of a cruel malady and impracticable conditions is well and faithfully described by von Ruville—though it seems to us strange how the last page of this elaborate work should describe Chatham as great only "in action"—for his "greatness did not lie in his home or foreign policy." We must all live and learn.

CHAPTER XV

THE CENTENARY OF TENNYSON

1909

TEN years have passed since I made bold to claim for Tennyson a special rank of his own among our English poets: one without rival during the long Victorian era, and during the amazing period of his creative work, which was prolonged for sixty years. It is twenty years since he published the last of these fascinating volumes, and we may now judge his place in the glorious roll of our island singers free from the glamour of his melody, without favour, partisanship, or fear of offence.

Again I make bold to insist that Tennyson still reigns in our hearts as alone the peer of Byron, Shelley, Keats, and Wordsworth. No others since Wordsworth's death in 1850, since his long silence for many previous years, can pretend to stand beside these four in the first half of the nineteenth century; and, in the second half of the century, Tennyson alone is of their rank. To-day, in this centenary of his birth, I wish to consider two questions: What is Tennyson's place in relation to these four earlier poets? What is his place in the roll of all our poets since Chaucer?

Sound judgment insists that poets, like all writers (except perhaps the moral philosophers), have to be

judged by their successes, not by their failures—by their splendid triumphs rather than by any calculable average or sum total of their product. All our poets (except Milton and Gray) published poetry that we can well do without, and, with the exception of Milton, for I will not disown *Paradise Regained*, they have all left poems which are sadly inferior to their own best. This, alas, is true even of Chaucer and of Spenser—nay, even of Shakespeare himself; at least, of some plays which bear his name. As to Byron, Shelley, Keats, and Wordsworth (not to speak of Dryden or of Pope and their schools and imitators; to say nothing of Cowper and Crabbe, their imitators and their schools), they have all left us poems which have truly irritating defects.

Byron, who, with all his sins, was our greatest poetic force since Milton, was the worst offender against the form of poetry, with his incurable habit of breaking out into ragged doggerel and conventional rhetoric. Shelley, again, who is conspicuously free from these crimes, too often becomes so vague, transcendental, and impalpable that one must be an esoteric illuminist to absorb the rays from so distant a star. Matthew Arnold for once quite broke his divining rod of criticism when he called Shelley an "ineffectual angel." But we do feel sometimes that Shelley was a truant angel who had lost his way, or rather was lost to human ken in the far-off empyrean. Nor had Shelley, with all his radiant light, the Titanic fire of Byron.

Poor Keats died prematurely before he had brought to full ripeness his matchless gifts, and they still unearth and reissue stuff of his which were raw experiments, or which should never meet the public eyes. Then, dear old Wordsworth, who in his best hour could wing his way beside Milton himself, would drone on for days and months together in insufferable

commonplace. Yet, for all their misfires, Byron, Shelley, Keats, and Wordsworth were glorious poets. In judging poetry we must not weigh it by the ton as if it were a cartload of bricks ; nor must failures be allowed to detract from successes. We must take account of nothing but the best.

Now, it is the peculiar distinction of Tennyson that, in spite of his immense product, as great as that of Byron or of Wordsworth, he is never ragged, obscure, raw, or tiresome. His consummate taste and refined ear saved him from ever sinking into vulgarity, commonplace, or a cloudland of melodious words, which were the favourite sins of Byron, of Wordsworth, of Shelley, and of Keats.

We might even say more than this, if we could only blot out some Primrose League catches and the monstrous sixteen-syllable lines of his decline. But for these we might say that Tennyson shares with Milton the high privilege of never committing himself to verses which have no trace of poetic form. Of all our poets Milton alone can be said never to have published lines unworthy of a poet—lines having neither melody, distinction, nor grace. We may say this of Shelley, if we grant that a poet may be cryptic or cloying at his own sweet will. In all this Tennyson ranks with Milton and Shelley, who alone of poets never stumble into uncouth prose. It is a great distinction to have produced some 60,000 lines all of which have been polished with uniform judgment.

This is a rare distinction, but its value must not be overstated. In our estimate of poetry we must avoid the reckoning up blunders such as examiners score with blue pencil and use to subtract marks. If we did, loose-tongued, hot-headed Byron would be left at the bottom of the list. We have to take

into account the sum of the truly fine things given us by the poet, the amount, variety, and range of the fine things, the permanent harvest of beauty, power, and insight contained in them, of a kind which is independent of place, time, or fashion. And in weighing it in this measure we have to admit that uniform grace and polish do not constitute in themselves a claim to the highest rank of poetry. If so, Gray would stand next after Milton. In the Day of Judgment, they tell us, gross offences may be forgiven for the sake of transcendent merits, which will outweigh a long life of decorous virtue such as needs no expiation.

For this reason the polished perfection of Tennyson's vast product could not raise him to a rank above that of Byron, Shelley, Keats, and Wordsworth, and almost to a par with Milton, unless his best work were greater than their best. In the heyday of his popularity with æsthetic graduates of both sexes, and with the hot zealots of Church and State, this perfection of polish was thought to raise him to a trio with Shakespeare and Milton. And he himself, perhaps, would not have very stoutly resented such homage. But the time is past for such ephemeral adulation. Tennyson will hold rank with the best poets of the nineteenth century; but he is certainly not in any class above them.

Turn first to Byron. Byron's best lovers ruefully admit that he had a tempestuous way of throwing off his thoughts roughcast — that he always wrote at a white heat, and too often left his first drafts uncorrected; that he sometimes descended to rant, jingle, and ribaldry. It is a grievous fault—and grievously has Byron answered it. His whole immense output was made not in sixty but in little more than fifteen years. For four or five years he poured out

poems at the scandalous rate of some hundreds of lines each day. This is no sort of excuse for a poet's indifference to poetic form. And if he had never done justice to his gifts, it would be decisive against Byron's claim to be a great poet. But it is not so. He often did do justice to his genius, in form as well as in thought. Many parts of *Childe Harold*, of *Don Juan*, of *Manfred*, of the lyrics, even of the early romances, are as full of metrical charm as of noble imagination. If we were to sacrifice two-thirds of his hasty work, we should still have a rich volume of fine poetry.

In his hours of true inspiration Byron proved himself to be a master of poetic form, in pure lyrics, in lyrical drama, in romantic, picturesque, passionate, and satiric verse. But his claim to high poetic rank lies in the imaginative power of the man. Those who will not admit him to be a poet at all admit the magnetism of his personal force. He had that rare creative genius which belongs to those who have stirred whole ages and diverse races. There is a curious French phrase which hits off this quality: "he had fire in his belly." With all his ribaldry and pose, Byron had flashes of that fire which burned in King David, in Æschylus, in Dante, and in Milton. He had the power which created new epochs in Greece, in Italy, which still, after nearly a hundred years, continues to resound in France, in Germany, in Scandinavia, in Russia, and in America. He literally created Greece as a nation; and he must be counted as one of the founders of Italian independence. *Manfred* has in it a sort of Dantesque vision of Man and Destiny which lifts it above any similar English poem of the nineteenth century, and places it beside *Faust*, as Goethe so justly and generously felt. Tens of thousands of cultivated men and women in Europe

and in America delight in Byron, while they never heard of Keats and never read a line of Wordsworth; and some fastidious critics tell us that is because Byron is "obvious." Byron is obvious in the sense of not being obscure; indeed, Horace or Pope is not more perfectly intelligible and direct. But it is not poetic mastery to be able to construct enigmas in verse; and it is one of the fads of our time to vaunt the industrious interpretation of metrical cryptograms.

Byron, after nearly a hundred years, is known throughout the civilised world. He is even a national poet both in Italy and in Greece. He has spoken to the hearts as well as to the imagination of whole races: he strikes light and heat out of everything he touches: he moves the thought and warms the spirit as only an original genius can. It is affectation to tell us that the man who does this is not a poet because he flung off a good deal of scrambling stuff which he ought to have burnt.

It is an ancient jest that *Childe Harold* is only *Baedeker* in rhyme, and that his Greek lyrics are artificial heroics. Why, half the sense of mysterious antiquity and poetic colour which the nineteenth century felt for Italy—all the passion it felt for the Alps—was due to Byron, who did for the English and for Americans what Goethe did for Germans and Madame de Staël and Rousseau did for the French. As to love of the sea, no verse has ever done so much as Byron's. Greek patriotism is literally the creation of Byron, for to every Hellene Byron is what Burns is to every Scot. This power of Byron to fuse his ideas into whole races places him as the first in rank, as he is the first in time, of the poets of the nineteenth century. In this palpable historic force, neither Shelley, nor Keats, nor Wordsworth approach Byron. Their reputation is strictly English: Byron's

is European. They are read only by the cultivated, Byron by all. Now, we cannot assign to Tennyson either the European vogue or the universal popularity which for nearly a hundred years Byron has possessed.

We must not be misled by Swinburne's spasmodic reviling of Byron. His mouthing in praise of Marlowe and in abuse of Byron is a type of that ill-balanced partisan criticism which does so much harm. Never trust a poet to judge a poet, nor a painter to judge a picture. They have loves and hates of their own manner or pet fancy. Now, Morley's estimate of Byron is far more broad and just. Swinburne had an exquisite sense of melody, albeit of a somewhat languorous and monotonous note. Indeed, he often indulged in what schoolboys call "nonsense verses"—lines which would scan but mean nothing. Our age is too prone to value the grace and music of mere words rather than thought, passion, and vision. It is a sign of a pedant's affectation to take Swinburne to be a greater poet than Byron. And for the same reason we must not allow Tennyson's exquisite form to blind us to the mass, the variety, the electric shock of Byron's thunder-peal.

When we weigh Byron in this scale — taking account of his mass, variety, and fire, and, above all his power over men of different race and language—it is impossible to place Tennyson above him. Tennyson is purely, permanently English—nor do Scotland, Wales, Ireland, much less the Alps, the Apennines, Rome, Venice, Athens, the Atlantic, or the Ægean, ever wring from him a cry of love and joy. Can we suppose that a century hence Englishmen will chant their Tennyson as Scots chant Burns, or as Italians and Greeks still worship Byron? Byron, Shelley, and Keats lived in worlds of antique mystery and passion, of broadly European nature, of the manifold humanity

common to all men of any tongue who care for imaginative work. Tennyson's "measured language" and "sad mechanic exercise," however beautiful and enchanting, belong exclusively to English homes, rectories, colleges, and cathedral closes—are eminently local, insular, and academic. No, it is only in the Fellows' common-room and in country parsonages that Tennyson is still held to be the typical poet of the nineteenth century.

Nor can any true lover of poetry rank Tennyson above Shelley. For, in the first place, Shelley has a polish of form at least equal to that of Tennyson, if we allow for the accidents of Shelley's text. And the true lover of poetry finds in *Prometheus*, in *Hellas*, in the *West Wind*, in the *Skylark* a melodious thrill such as not only Tennyson never sounded, but no English poet save Shakespeare and Milton alone. It is true that there is a great deal of Shelley which is too subtle and too ethereal for "the general," and perhaps will ever remain the privilege of the cultured few, and for the most part of English race.

Shelley has no small measure of Byron's human and social enthusiasm, of his passion for the splendour and majesty of Nature, of that trumpet-note of humanity, of that vision of a regenerate future, which in Byron redeem his many sins against true taste. If Shelley did not impose his personality upon his age as did Byron, he was undoubtedly a far more consummate master of his poetic instrument. And in this he must be counted as even superior to Tennyson; whilst it would be difficult to produce any important addition to English poetry in the veteran Victorian poet which we could not match in the earlier Georgian poet, cut off in his prime. To rank Tennyson above Shelley would be to rank him also above Byron. And yet, with all his faultless metrical resources, Tennyson

wants the intellectual force of Byron and the intellectual distinction of Shelley.

The case is different with Keats ; for Keats himself is only a promise, and his small volume of poems is itself but a fragment. We must never forget that what we prize of Keats was written before he was twenty-four—at an age before Milton had written *Lycidas* or Shakespeare had written *Venus and Adonis*. As I said once, Keats was "an unformed, untrained, neuropathic youth of genius whose whole achievement came earlier in life than that of almost any other man recorded in our literature, indeed in any literature." It is rather irritating to find some neuropathic critics of our decadence asserting that Keats's really magical gift for poetic form—a gift that reminds us of that of Sappho or Theocritus—was enough to constitute him a poet of the first rank. Keats will always be to us a great "Perhaps"—one who might have been one knows not what—*si qua fata aspera rumpat*. Yet, whatever the wonderful promise of the hapless youth, neither his range of vision, nor his force, nor his intellect were such as to place him in the foremost rank. The large achievement, the serious thought, and the inexhaustible fancy of Tennyson are of an altogether different order and appeal to a far maturer mind.

We more easily compare Tennyson with Wordsworth. Both had very long life, wholly and solely devoted to the poetic art ; they were essentially poets of Nature ; both given to meditation, moral and religious musing rather than to action ; both have exercised a permanent influence over the poetic ideal of their age. Wordsworth carried his love of solitary musing and of rustic simplicity to a point where they often degenerated into tiresome reiteration and even laughable banality ; whilst Tennyson's unerring taste kept him free from such vexatious commonplace. The most ardent

Wordsworthians agree to leave out of account no small part of Wordsworth's immense product; whilst no loyal Tennysonian would imitate their example. Though Tennyson published much which is not equal to his best, he never wearies us with truly unreadable prosing as does Wordsworth. Yet Wordsworth's best is of an order quite as high as is Tennyson's best. To say the truth, I turn more often to the *Excursion* than to *In Memoriam*; and there are sonnets, odes, and lyrics of Wordsworth which I would not sacrifice even to save the *Idylls*, *Maud*, and lyrics of Tennyson's early and best manner.

Neither Coleridge, nor Scott, nor Burns, nor Campbell, nor Landor belong to the first rank as poets, however ardent be our delight in their special triumphs. The *Ancient Mariner*, *Christabel*, and a few lyrics and hymns are a joy for ever; but the sum of Coleridge's muse is neither full enough nor powerful enough to place him beside Byron, Shelley, or Tennyson. Burns is so exclusively national, and Scott is so entirely the romancist, that we do not count either as in the foremost roll of English poetry, with all the exquisite ring of their lovely songs and ballads. And Campbell, Landor, and some others who have left us memorable things have not given us enough in measure and in power to place them amongst the greatest names of the nineteenth century.

The twentieth century will adjudge this rank to Byron, Shelley, Wordsworth, and Keats, and beyond question Tennyson will be held to be their peer. Their peer, I say, not their superior; or, if superior to any one of the four, to Keats, on the ground that his work is fragmentary and immature. But I cannot believe that any other poet of the second half of the century will permanently be placed beside the great men of the first half. Our beloved Robert Browning

belongs in a sense to the first as well as to the second half of the nineteenth century; and, though he touches at times on Byron's and on Shelley's themes, he must be counted rather of the later Victorian world. By the "later Victorian world" I mean that of subtle, psychologic, analytic conception, of elaborately minted phrase, and daring metrical experiments.

Browning had rare genius, a keen and broad view of life, masculine philosophy, creative power; and in these gifts he was more akin to Byron than was Tennyson. We need not deny the contention of ardent Browningites that his mental force was both deeper and more robust than that of Tennyson. But a poet needs not only mental force but unique form, melody, grace, the inevitable and unforgettable word which gives wings to his thought. Browning has given us now and then a ballad and a lyric of glorious music, apparently to show us that he could write musical verse when he deigned to humour us. But a great poet does not bury profound ideas in cryptograms that we have to unravel as if they were puzzle-locks, nor does he twist and torture the King's English into queer vocables that raise a smile.

We have just lost two men of genius, both of whom were typical examples of the later Victorian world—though in quite opposite veins. Meredith was a brilliant novelist rather than a poet; and all he had to say in poetry—and he had the poetic soul—would have been more truly said in prose. Nature had denied him an ear for music in verse, to which he seems insensible, just as Beethoven's deafness never permitted him to hear his own magnificent symphonies. For all its subtlety and originality, Meredith's verse is unreadable by reason of its intolerable cacophony. I doubt if he ever wrote a piece which would have

satisfied Tennyson's infallible sense of harmonious rhythm.

Swinburne, on the other hand, with a singular gift for harmonious rhythm, seemed to regard this quality as the be-all and end-all of poetry. For my part, I cannot feel that he ever added much after he first burst upon the world with the splendid promise of his *Atalanta* in 1865, though for more than forty years he continued to publish poems. His marvellous metrical agility, the melodious piping in honied words "long-drawn-out," the apparently inexhaustible fountain of harmonies at his command, all this for a time is fascinating. But ere long the flow of mellifluous epithets and of haunting rhymes begins to pall on us. The verse lives in a tarantula of alliteration, assonance, consonance, and artful concatenation of sounds. It is very beautiful; but at last it becomes monotonous, cloying, a mannerism. And what does it all come to in the end? What is there to think out? What does it mean? For what is all this passion? And why do these interminable sonatas never end—or why, indeed, should they end? Only in the decadence of a silver age could Swinburne be placed in a rank with Tennyson.

If neither Browning nor Swinburne will hereafter take rank with Tennyson, surely no others of his contemporaries or successors will do so. Let us have done with cliques, and schools, and fads! For my part I honour and enjoy them all in turn; but I will not let my honour or my delight blind me to defects in those I love; nor will a balanced judgment suffer me to exalt a favourite for some conspicuous charm. Shakespeare and Milton stand apart in a world of their own, without rival or peer—*hors concours*—for they are the poets not of English literature but of all literature. Chaucer and Spenser

are more honoured than read; the men of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries are more read than honoured. And we now feel sure that Tennyson will hold an honoured place with the great names of the nineteenth century — not above them, hardly below them, but finally enrolled in their glorious company.

CHAPTER XVI

THYSIA

1908

THERE lately came to my hands, from one wholly unknown to me even by name, a tiny volume of thirty-five sonnets, which I hold to be of exquisite quality and of origin quite unique. They are the groans of a bereaved husband for the loss of a beloved wife—written day by day in presence of her last illness, of her dead body, of her burial, and the first desolation of his old home. There is in these daily devotions a poignant ring, a vivid reality, an intense realism, which mark them off from all literary elegies of any kind. And as being the consecration of married love in rare form, I judge them to have a truly unique origin. To my ear their language has a melody and a purity such as few living poets surpass.

The intensity of passion felt on such a bereavement by a sensitive nature is unhappily far from rare. And perhaps many a cultivated spirit has sought to express such grief in words. But the world has not seen these outpourings of soul ; or they have been composed when years have passed to veil the keenness of sorrow. The elegies which live in immortal poetry record a friend, a lover, a genius, or a hero, as do the undying lines of Dante or of Petrarch, of Shelley or of Tennyson.

When Milton in his dream saw his "late espoused Saint brought to him like Alcestis from the grave," he unluckily reminded us of Admetus, who was not an heroic husband. Indeed, since the lovely sonnets of Rossetti, I cannot recall any poem written by a bereaved husband in the very presence of the coffin and the grave of an adored wife, in which he has so laid bare the extremity of his despair.

Now, the quality of these sonnets which stirred me before I had read three of them was their directness of stroke, the simplicity of speech, scorning the least concession to literary colour. Without ornament, trope, image, or any artificial grace, they have that pathos inscribed on marble in the best Greek epitaphs. They remind me of that wailing elegy on Atthis of Cnidos—also by an unknown author—could the author be any but her husband?—

> Ἀγνά, πουλυγόητε, τι πένθιμον ὕπνον ἰαύεις
> ἀνδρὸς ἀπὸ στέρνων οὔποτε θεῖσα κάρα
> Θεῖον ἐρημώσασα τὸν οὐκέτι · σοὶ γὰρ ἐς Ἄιδαν
> ἦλθον ὁμοῦ ζωᾶς ἐλπίδες ἀμετέρας.[1]

Had these reiterating dirges of a present sorrow—ringing slowly with the monotone of a funeral bell—had they been less simple, direct, and chiselled in form, they would have been painful. We should shrink from being in the presence of such agony, in touch with a living soul so broken, so hopeless, face to face with all the realities of such a fate. But the words in their stern self-restraint, their dignified self-abandonment, in their quiet disdain of art, seem to me to have a true art of their own.

[1] It is Epitaph *LI.* in Mr. Mackail's beautiful collection. "Atthis, holy one, much bewept, how is it that thou art sleeping the sad sleep, thou who never yet pillowed thy head away from the bosom of thy husband, thou who hast left desolate thy Theius to a living death? For with thee all hope of my living has passed into outer darkness."

Nor could we endure to have these elegies prolonged; for the very note of them is to avoid all thoughts extraneous to the ever-present sense of bereavement and loneliness. But in a very short collection of sonnets the sense of continuous and abiding grief is deeply impressive. When I received a copy of these poems —I know not from whom—I wrote through the publisher to the author to express my interest, and to urge him to complete and revise the series. This he has now done and has issued them in an enlarged edition. They now form forty-five sonnets, each of fourteen lines. Nearly all belong to the few months past since the grave was closed.[1] The author insists on keeping his personality strictly undisclosed.

The close of the first sonnet sounds the theme of the requiem music which is extended in the order of an elaborate *fugue*:

> O love, my love long since, my love to be,
> O living love, for evermore my own,
> Mine in the spaces of eternity,
> Mine in the worlds that circle round God's throne,
> Mine by dear human love's sealed benison,
> And mine by His vast love in whom all love is one.

In the *Prelude* (No. ii.) the poet replies to one who doubted if so sombre a monotone were not to place bonds on art. His heart is with the nightingale—not with the lark. He feels the glory of the morning bird on high—but his own song is attuned to the songster of the night:

> Twin songs there are, of joyance, or of pain;
> One of the morning lark in midmost sky,
> When falls to earth a mist, a silver rain,
> A glittering cascade of melody;

[1] *Thysia: An Elegy.* New Edition, by Morton Luce. Enlarged. (George Bell & Sons, 1908. 12mo.)

And mead and wold and the wide heaven rejoice,
  And praise the Maker ; but alone I kneel
In sorrowing prayer. Then wanes the day ; a voice
  Trembles along the dusk, till peal on peal
It pierces every living heart that hears,
  Pierces and burns and purifies like fire ;
Again I kneel under the starry spheres,
  And all my soul seems healed, and lifted higher,
Nor could that jubilant song of day prevail
Like thine of tender grief, O Nightingale.

The whole series of poems belongs to the solitary voice that "trembles along the dusk."

To the world which is so prone to look for enjoyment he says :

Even as a bird when he has lost his mate
  Fills all the grove with his melodious wrong,
So I, who mourn a grief more passionate,
  To you, O world, address my harsher song ;
Yet scorn it not ; sing with me, if ye will ;
  My sorrow is your sorrow—yours my hope.

It was in the spring of last year that the signs of mortal illness were too plain to be denied. She still lived (Sonnet v.) :

Her one poor hand holds a resplendent prize
  The one white violet I digged at morn.

As the year grew, the summer brought back the rose to her cheek, and to the husband's heart the hope that the bitterness of death was past :

Near where the violets grew, as days went by,
  I found a budding hope, and bore it home.

The end came on the 27th of November (Sonnet vii.) :

I watch beside you in your silent room ;
  Without, the chill rain falls, life dies away,
The dead leaves drip, and the fast gathering gloom
  Closes around this brief November day,

First day of holy death, of sacred rest—
. . . . . .
Dear heart, I linger but a little space,
Sweet wife, I come to your new world ere long.

Between death and funeral the stricken man cries out:

Relentless Death, could you not spare me this?
Could you not strike at me—your happiest stroke?
. . . . . .
I only live, where all is yours, O Death.

On the last day of November comes the funeral (Sonnet ix.):

The sun sinks with a visage of despair,
And freezing vapours like a nightmare fall;
Death on the earth beneath, Death in the air,
Where the bell tolls, and heaven is one vast pall.

He returns home to his "barren house left desolate" to feel himself now indeed *Alone* (Sonnet x.):

The bier, the bell, the grave, silence, and night
And you are laid in that cold ground, and gone?
. . . . . .
But over it the affrighted stars will shiver,
And the world weep, and the wind moan for ever.

Weeks pass, and Christmas Day arrives, but it brings no joy nor rest:

No Christmas bells I hear; one slow bell rings
Its monotone of death within my breast.

He seeks change of scene by the seashore:

βῆ δ' ἀκέων παρὰ θῖνα πολυφλοίσβοιο θαλάσσης,

but he wanders "back to the little home he left forlorn," his "weary feet turn from the sullen sea."

There is a cruel picture of *The Deserted House* (Sonnet xii.):

I watch within your silent room once more ;
Without, the dead leaf shivers in the blast ;
Your broken comb, your glove are on the floor,
The cold clouds see them, and they shudder past,
Startled they look upon the empty bed,
The vacant chair, the couch left desolate,
The dying flowers that saw you lying dead,
And me, who bow beneath my sorrow's weight,
Who only hear that bell's sad monotone—
"Alone, alone, for evermore alone."

The wedding day comes round, but only adds a new pang (Sonnet xiii.) :

My voice but tears, my music but a moan,
And my last wish in your lone grave to sleep.

He unexpectedly discovers her portrait :

I kiss your silent lips, sad, sad relief,—
Ah ! God, for those sweet words they used to say.

The New Year has no message of relief (Sonnet xvi.) :

Comes the New Year ; wailing the north winds blow ;
In her cold, lonely grave my dead love lies ;
Dead lies the stiffened earth beneath the snow,
And blinding sleet blots out the desolate skies.
I stand between the living and the dead ;
Hateful to me is life, hateful is death.

Sorrow grows only more real by time (Sonnet xviii.) :

Weeks pass : I stand beside your grave again ;
Yet is my agony not less, but more,
And like a river widening to the main,
Deeper it flows, if calmer than before.
. . . . .
Two snowdrops lift their white heads from the clay ;
They come like ghosts of buried memories.

It is again *Early Spring* (Sonnet xxi.):

> Alone I wander forth in early spring,
> And tell my sorrow to each tender flower;
> . . . . . .
> By that dear bank where the white violets grew,
> The violets slept beneath, as she sleeps now.

The first part of the collection, entitled *Death and Love*—the strictly funeral part—closes with Sonnet xxv., inscribed *Our Grave*. I must cite it entire from its simple purity of thought, and to my ear an exquisite melody in the minor key:

> Where the bird warbles earliest, and new light
> Wakes the first buds of spring; where breezes sleep
> Or sigh with pity half the summer night,
> While the pale loving stars look down to weep,
> There lies our grave; a slender plot of ground
> 'Tis all of earth we own; no cross; no tree,
> Nothing to mark it, but a little mound;
> But there my darling stays; she waits for me,
> The lily in her hand; and when I come
> She will be glad to greet me, and will say,
> "Your lily, dearest, gives you welcome home."
> But ah! dear Lord, I hunger with delay;
> Tell me, blest Lord, shall I have long to wait?
> For I must haste, or she will think me late.

To the first part of the poem there is now added a second part—the utterance of a grief more chastened and at last lighted up with sure hope of blissful reunion in the world to come. For this writer is profoundly saturated with religious faith in a future life. He is now sure that the parting will not be for long:

> So listen, love, to this sad threnody,
> This song of death by one who soon must die.

He continues to dwell in memory on the loving nature of her whom he has lost—"thy way was sweet self-sacrifice"—he revisits the grave and

"marvels at the summer flowers" which surround it. He recalls their wedding and the first rapture of their married life, the incidents of their existence in one soul, and the anniversaries of each birthday, wedding day, and journeys together. In early summer her birthday is come; he will rise and gather once again

> The summer posy that she knew so well.

He calls aloud to her favourite flowers:

> So, orchis, come, and woodbine, as of old;
> Come to my darling, each fair flower that blows;
> Cowslip and meadow-cress, and marigold,
> The last sweet bluebell and the first sweet rose.

Then the flowers listen and answer joyfully:

> We come, we come: O lead us to our Queen,

But the sad poet replies:

> Nay, gentle flowers, my weary steps must rove,
> And lay you on the grave of her you love.

He meditates on the full meaning of the maxim to which the lives of both were devoted:

> There's nothing we can call our own but Love.

He realises more fully than ever that in mutual love alone can the true path of life be found, as also the essential power of true religion:

> Love is self-giving; therefore love is God.

This meditation leads the poet on to a fine sonnet on immortality, beginning:

> Hear, O Self-giver, infinite as good,

The series of sonnets then passes into a strictly devotional tone—on the spiritual meaning of a sacred

sorrow, on the regenerating power of such trials of the heart:

> Hope humbly, then, sad heart, through all thy pain;
> Yea, choose thy sorrow as thy chiefest gain.

He acknowledges at last

> By pain alone is wisdom perfected.

He now dedicates his verses to *Truth*, *Sorrow*, *Faith*, *Hope*. Even a sleepless night has its message to the soul as he gazes on the spangled sky and notes

> The tranquil march of heaven's majesty,

and so the constellations above suggest an unlimited and unending aspiration of good to be:

> Yea, like the night, my dream of infinite good
> Is beautiful with stars in multitude.

But, at last, as the poem closes, hope, and the just resolution to work out the appointed time of life, take the place of despair and the hunger for death. And in the final sonnet—addressed *To the Lord God*—the poet manfully declares that he "will not rest before the grave":

> Let me fight on; teach me to choose Thy way.
> . . . . . .
> And find eternal peace in her dear love and Thine.

As will have been observed, the forty-five sonnets are all cast in the familiar English form—not in the lovely, but for us impossible, Italian type. It is the scheme of Shakespeare's sonnets; and clearly that is the rhythm which the poet has kept before him as his ideal. One who has read the brief extracts in this paper will have seen the rare gift of melody which

they show. It was his fine sense of music which arrested my own attention when the humble volume first came into my hands. But I will cite one or two detached lines which to my ear ring with a true poignant thrill.

Take these lines of autumn season :

> Hark ! how it mourns around the empty folds,
> Or sighs amid the ruined marigolds.

To my mind the sonnet entitled *Vespers* (xxvi.) opens with a quatrain of exquisite modulation :

> I love to watch the sunset gold grow dim
> On the lone peak of some enchanted fell,
> To catch the murmur of a vesper hymn,
> Or far-off lullaby of vesper bell.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> What time the bird of woe through deepening shade,
> Flutes his wild requiem o'er the buried sun.

And a stronger clarion is heard in the sonnet entitled *Woman* (xxvii.), which opens thus :

> Why do the ages celebrate in song,
> Man, or the deeds of man, crowning with bays
> The warrior, the oppressor, and the wrong,
> And leave unsung woman's diviner praise ?

Of his own verses the poet speaks :

> Like soft, recurrent moanings of the dove.

Or, again, his wreath of song is

> The first to wither on the grave of Love.

It is too much the fashion of our day to require in poetry a subtle involution of thought, cryptic parables, the "curious felicity"—or rather the laborious "curiosity"—of precious phrase, such as may rival the ambiguity of a double acrostic in a lady's journal.

There are some who will hardly count anything poetry unless it need many a re-reading to unravel its inner connotations. And for the sake of this subtlety, or rather as a hall-mark of this superfine "mentality," as they call it in their jargon, they desiderate an uncouthness of diction, or at least a sputtering cacophony of strident discords, that would

have made Quintilian stare and gasp.

For my part, I have no taste for conundrums rhymed or un-rhymed. I will read no poetry that does not tell me a plain tale in honest words, with easy rhythm and pure music. The true pathos ever speaks to us in simple utterance, not in tortured tropes and mystical allusions, as Dante's

that day we read no more,

or Wordsworth's

and never lifted up a single stone.

I find this simple directness of speech in this unknown poet. Every line has a meaning entirely obvious and definite. It needs no commentary, no second reading to unriddle it, no special society to discover and to unfold its beauties. And its music is that of Beethoven's *Adelaïda*, or of Gluck's *Orfeo—Che farò senza Euridice?*

It is sad—yes, it is bitterly sad—cruel in its fate; and yet how common, almost universal, in its bereavement! The world, I know, shrinks to-day from anything that is sad. With ostrich-like folly it turns its eyes away from what is painful. I know no worse sign of moral weakness and childish frivolity than its artificial shudder at all that is sad and tragic.

By pain alone is wisdom perfected.

CHAPTER XVII

THE LIFE OF RUSKIN *

1911

THE enormous amount and variety of Ruskin's writings, and the multiplicity of his undertakings, made it inevitable that a full and authoritative Life should be composed; and it was also as entirely right that the task should be entrusted to Mr. E. T. Cook, Ruskin's pupil, friend, interpreter, and Editor of the mighty "Library Edition" of his works in thirty-eight volumes, with illustrations, facsimiles, and masses of explanatory notes.

A hasty view might suggest that with the immense amount of autobiographic and biographic matter scattered through these thirty-eight volumes—to say nothing of the thousand and one Lives, estimates, criticisms, bibliographies, and illustrations of Ruskin already before the world, there would be no place, and perhaps no demand, for any new Life. It is certainly not so. The fact that all this biographic material about one of the most brilliant writers in English literature—and certainly about an extraordinary genius in the Victorian age—was so large and dispersed over so many volumes made it necessary to put it all into

* *The Life of Ruskin*, by E. T. Cook. George Allen & Sons.

one book. The work had to be done—and no living man but Mr. Cook could fitly do it.

There is another quality which makes this book both new and indispensable. For the first time the biographer has had access to the Diaries and Letters to his family and friends which Ruskin left behind him. These no outside biographer or critic has ever seen. Now, Ruskin's Diaries are unlike any known diaries whatever. They contain some of the most magnificent passages of eloquent prose that he ever wrote. And, together with the unpublished Autobiographic Notes which he intended to use in future books, and in the heaps of intimate revelations of his spirit and his thoughts which he poured out in letters to his relatives and his friends, they bring us nearer to the real man than even the works in thirty-eight volumes. The Diaries indeed are almost unique in literature. Written for no eye but his own, without a thought of publication, it would seem mainly to disburden his soul of its troubles, its joys, or its hopes; they contain some of his most gorgeous descriptions of nature and art; and more than that, they put into burning words the yearnings of his heart, in a way that reminds us of the *Meditations* of Marcus Aurelius or the *Confessions* of Saint Augustine. Armed with these materials Mr. Cook has given us the complete and final *Life of Ruskin.*

Now that we have this standard portrait of Ruskin as writer, as thinker, and as man, the question arises, if it has in any way altered or enlarged our previous conception of his character and his influence. It has deepened and vivified our conception, but it has neither varied nor displaced it. The Ruskin of 1911 is the "Graduate" of 1843, of *Unto This Last* in 1860, of *Praeterita* in 1889. The twenty-two years of research and all the revelations in the new

Diaries, *Notes*, and *Letters*, of to-day have not at all changed the Ruskin whom we knew. They only make our memory of him more vivid, more complete. The thoughtful reader of Mr. Cook's two volumes should now be able to understand the mind, the imaginings, the sorrows, the difficulties, the tempests, the passions, the magnanimity, the loving heart, and heroic temper of John Ruskin in a way perhaps more intimate than of any other man of his crowded age.

This I make bold to say, being one of the few living men who knew him and his father in 1860 at Dulwich, and thenceforth down to his last years at Brantwood, having written his Life, and sundry Essays and Estimates, yet being wholly detached from the inner circle of his disciples. My own short book is an Estimate quite as much as a Life. Mr. Cook's is a true biography, and if it touches on any judgment, it is by way of explanation or defence. We who are not esoteric followers may wish that all this had been less evident; but it is really a quite minor element in the book, and much of it was clearly inevitable in a devoted pupil and friend.

In a fine chapter Mr. Cook at last sums up his conclusions as to the influence of Ruskin upon the English and the foreign world, as art-critic, as social reformer, and as moralist and prophet. I cannot agree with an eminent critic who holds that the biographer exaggerates and at times misconceives Ruskin's influence both literary and social. For my part, and I am indeed an impartial witness, seeing that Ruskin was an unsparing opponent to the school of thought in which I was bred, I find almost the whole of Mr. Cook's judgments to be just and instructive. He strikes the fundamental note of Ruskin's career when he tells us that it proves a close connection between his æsthetic and his economic

work. In a fine passage (ii. 579), Mr. Cook says that it has been "a main theme of his Biography to illustrate their intimate connection, both in Ruskin's thought and in his deeds. It is this which gives consistency to his life, system to his thought, and the distinctive character to his writings. Art not for art's sake, but art in relation to life; art as the exponent of individual and of national character; life without industry as guilt, but industry without art as brutality; beauty in a world governed by social justice: these are ideas implied in all Ruskin's books."

There are a few points of a very intimate kind wherein the new Biography adds to our knowledge—at least it does so to me who knew Ruskin at home, was in touch with him for nearly forty years, and who has studied all he ever wrote. These points are his personal affections, his religious history, and his agonies of soul. We knew how Ruskin's parents misunderstood and hampered him. We now know that he felt it deeply himself, and even told his father just before his death, that they had "thwarted him in all the earnest fire of passion and life." We have now also disclosed the true story of Ruskin's only love. Allowing for the fact of a man of fifty loving and proposing marriage, under his conditions, to a beautiful girl of twenty, there is here the tale of a real love and crushing sorrow lasting over a large part of his life.

As to the course of his religious opinions, we knew generally that he had passed through three stages—early Puritan orthodoxy, vague scepticism, and back to sincere, but mystical, faith. We now have the precise colour of these transitions recorded in private diaries and intimate letters. They are personally interesting; exactly what might be

expected from his entourage and the nature of his mind; but from a philosophical point of view, quite unimportant. One was aware of the "slough of despond" into which Ruskin fell at times—but the new letters and diaries reveal the intense agony he endured, even in seasons of health, active work, and pleasant surroundings. He was thirty-three and enjoying Chamouni when he wrote: "It is so strange to me to feel happy that it frightens me." "I feel as if I were living in one great churchyard, with people all round me clinging feebly to the edges of open graves," he wrote at forty-eight. At fifty-seven, after the death of his beloved Rose, he is oppressed by "a quite terrible languor," to be soon followed, as we know, by violent cerebral attacks. What else could be the issue with a man who had seven books in hand at once, and at fifty tells a friend of ten separate tasks on which he was working? "I have too many irons in the fire," he said. Alas! that was the tragedy of his life.

One of the chief things we wish to learn about a great writer is the way in which he worked; and the meticulous care of the biographer now makes it perfectly clear. We all knew that Ruskin was one of the most profuse writers recorded in literature; and it was natural to suppose that these perennial floods of grand and passionate appeal on everything in heaven or earth were improvised in haste and thrown to the world in that spontaneous form. I devoted a separate Essay to the study of Ruskin's mastery over the genius of prose and his wonderful ear for melody and cadence. Mr. Cook shows us from letters and autograph manuscripts that this perfection of form was the result of long and scrupulous study. It makes the story of his style still more amazing. What a lesson to some of us amateurs who tumble

out what we want to say just as it comes, and hardly have the patience to correct a proof. The facsimile of Ruskin's "copy" (i. 362) shows elaborate revisions and erasures, and as to proofs, the printer told his father that the bill for "corrections" would absorb the profits. He revised *Modern Painters* as Virgil revised the *Æneid*, "licking the lines into form as a she-bear licks her cubs."

Even to those who know the thirty-eight volumes there will be found here many new things. At first he was "disgusted" with St. Peter's, and apparently with Rome and the Sistine. At Abbeville he wrote: "I seem born to conceive what I cannot execute, recommend what I cannot obtain, and mourn over what I cannot save." He loves fish, "because they always swim with their heads against the stream." He was for a graduated income tax, and a super-tax. He had an "utter loathing" for Maudle's æsthetic movement. To be without hope of a future life "makes one braver and stronger" (1861). He is "no Misanthrope, only a disappointed philanthropist." His "religion is to be old Greek"—"it is entirely certain, which is an immense comfort." His religion, writes Mr. Cook (about 1874), "had become 'the religion of humanity.'" In 1887 (age sixty-eight), he was "a Christian Catholic in the wide and eternal sense." To that intensely sensitive, imaginative, humane spirit, all things spiritual and material were passing to and fro as in an ever-moving panorama.

CHAPTER XVIII

CHARLES ELIOT NORTON

1827-1908

As one of the surviving friends in England who knew Eliot Norton for nigh upon half a century, having been his host on more than one occasion in this country, and also twice his guest in the home in which he was born and in which he died in Massachusetts, I venture to offer to all those whom he left to regret him, both here and there, a few words of affectionate remembrance.

I shall limit myself to my personal memories and regard for the man ; for his varied writings and his dominant literary influence have been so fully described by others that it needs now no further praise. It is of the man himself I wish to speak. For as friend, as interpreter of movements and ideas, as host or as guest, as an intellectual link between two continents as well as between two nations, as for two generations a centre of Anglo-American thought—Norton held a position which, at least in the twentieth century, he came to hold absolutely alone.

In old Greece there used to be at Athens, and other republics, a citizen of high standing who was known

as the Proxenos of some foreign State, whose duty it was hospitably to welcome, advise, and assist foreign visitors to Athens. The simple Proxenos held an honorary, unofficial, friendly function, something between that of a modern consul and an ambassador. Now Norton came at last to be recognised as a sort of volunteer minister for American literature in Europe, and still more distinctly as Proxenos, or Consul-General for British literature and men of letters in his native State in America.

I had met Norton as a young man during his early visits to England. But when he passed some months at Keston, in Kent, it chanced that I was his neighbour in the country. In 1859 and thenceforward until my own marriage I lived with my father between Beckenham and Bromley in Kent. Eden Park then stood in a beautiful and quiet woodland country, before railways and villas had made it a suburb of London. The house, since destroyed, had some historic associations, for it was occupied in the eighteenth century by Lord Auckland, and it was there that the youthful William Pitt made his first (and only) proposal of marriage to Miss Eden, Lord Auckland's daughter. It was a house in which Gibbon had stopped on his way to Lord Sheffield at Uckfield ; and, years later on, Louis Philippe stayed there in the days of his wanderings in exile. Eden was within a walk of Hayes Place, where Lord Chatham lived and died, and also within a drive of Keston and of Down, the home of Darwin.

It was from Keston Rectory that Norton, with his wife and family, visited us at Eden. It is now quite forty years ago ; but I well remember the impression produced on me and on us all by the quiet, serious, and sympathetic American, who knew so many famous people and had seen so much. The somewhat slow and

emphatic speech (as it sounded in the rattle of London society), the guarded and balanced criticism of men and things, the detachment of spirit and the freedom from all traditional and conventional formulas—all this was as conspicuous in Norton at the age of forty as it was at eighty.

But the young Mrs. Eliot Norton charmed us all by her beauty, her grace, and her distinction. Forty years ago there were not so many beautiful and distinguished American women in England as there are now. Mrs. Norton had many of the best characteristics of her husband. She had the same refined taste, the same gentleness, sympathy, and love of learning. And, beyond that, she had the unmistakable *cachet* of a woman's elegance. No one would have taken her for an Englishwoman, with the suppleness, elasticity, and *dolcezza* of manner which we associate with a south European. And yet no one could take her for French, Italian, or Spanish. She was far too distinctly Anglo-Saxon for that, as indeed she looked. No! she was American, and American of the best type—the type which combines hearty frankness and independence with perfect suavity and simplicity of bearing.

Mrs. Norton the elder, the widowed mother of our friend, was quite as striking a type of the New England matron of the Pilgrim Fathers school—serious, stately, placidly observant and courteous, but unbending in every matter that had come as a tradition from her forbears, intellectual, moral, or spiritual.

I remember Norton as my guest at the Reform Club in London when I collected a small party of political and literary friends. He interested them all, rather perhaps because he was so different from the familiar club oracle than by his imposing himself and his opinions on us. The perfectly open mind, ready

to weigh any new view, political, social, or artistic, and yet not at all ready to pronounce judgment without a probing kind of criticism all his own, the staid demeanour that to us Londoners had something of the Puritan air, the cosmopolitan tone of the man, who as a youth had travelled far and wide, from extreme West to extreme East, who was no opinionated Yankee and yet no sentimental slave to European culture—all this was a combination quite uncommon in Pall Mall forty years ago.

I saw him at intervals and had some correspondence in the intervening years, but I pass to a later period of his life, when in his seventy-fifth year I visited him at his house at Cambridge, near Boston. He was then distinctly a veteran who had resigned his professorship for some years past, and was living in quiet ease with his three daughters in his ancestral home, within a walk of his beloved college of Harvard. All his world-famous friends were at that time gone—Emerson, Longfellow, Holmes, Lowell, Carlyle, and Ruskin. He himself was bright and active, was still doing some editing and occasional studies, but was not, I think, engaged on any continuous work of importance. He was leading a life of literary retirement, as a sort of Emeritus Professor of the Best Thought in our two races.

I venture to call his residence at Shady Hill, near Cambridge, his ancestral home, because from the American point of view this is really true. I remember, when he received me at my first visit and showed me over the house and grounds, he said, "I am one of the few Americans who in old age still live in the house of my father in which I was born." That is of course in the twentieth century a very rare thing. The enormous scale of the cities and districts in the United States, the incredible rapidity of growth in

everything round the industrial centres, the mobility and facilities for change of place and life, interest and occupation, the sudden increase of wealth and social position common to most active citizens, however born, make it most unusual for the American, at the end of a long life, to find it convenient, or even possible, to live in the house in which he was born.

This Norton did, as also did one or two famous Bostonians. But in such a city as New York the only person I ever heard of as living in his family house was Abram Hewitt, once mayor and eminent philanthropist. Norton dearly cherished his own Shady Hill, and he had ample cause to do so. The property was what we call a small park and homestead, with fine timber plantations and shrubberies, standing on a modest hill within an hour's drive of Boston. The house is a roomy half-timber erection of the old-world New England type, with verandahs and outdoor shelters about it, having pleasant woodland views, and standing in its own plantations and lawns, entirely shut off from the wilderness of new villas and tram-car avenues which crowd the suburbs of Boston. It looks, what it is, a relic of Old Massachusetts, swept round but not engulfed in the torrent of the modern industrial progress which, in a hundred years, has hemmed it in and partially snatched it away. To compare a small and simple thing with a great and magnificent thing, Shady Hill in its old woodland recess stands as Holland House still stands, like an oasis of antique repose in the roaring labyrinth of modern Kensington. There seemed to me, coming fresh from New York and Chicago, a graceful pathos about Shady Hill, a bit of Puritan New England which had stood unchanged for a hundred years, that was in curious harmony with the nature and life of its venerable owner.

There Norton showed a true New England hospi-

tality to one whom he had known as a tiro in politics and letters forty years ago, one who had known something of his great English and also of his American friends. I met under his roof not a few leaders of Boston literature and science, as well as professors and students of Harvard College. We had at dinner Mr. J. Ford Rhodes, the learned and indefatigable historian of the United States since the Civil War, now a standard work in his own country and in ours. We had Colonel Charles F. Adams, son of the late Minister, and since President of the Massachusetts Historical Society, Professor Lawrence Lowell, the learned author of *The Government of England*, and Judge Oliver Wendell Holmes. And with these came eminent Harvard men; though unfortunately, during the period of my two visits to Cambridge, the President, Dr. Eliot, a cousin of Norton's, was away in the south. At a reception in the evening Norton collected a large and distinguished company from Cambridge, Harvard, and Boston. To every English student who had the good fortune to be known to him, Norton threw open his home as if it were a sort of literary embassy for a foreigner on a tour.

This reception and an introduction to so many eminent men in America remains one of the pleasantest memories of my life. But there was nothing exceptional in this, nor did I suppose that I personally deserved such a welcome; for I am well aware that many an English visitor to Boston has had a similar experience, and it was one that Norton was always ready to extend to every Englishman, who he thought would really value such a kind of hospitality. To any traveller from home, indeed from Europe, who had any serious place in literature or in science, to be received by Eliot Norton was to have a passport into the best academic world of the United States.

Among the other pleasures of a visit to Shady Hill was to be shown by Norton through his collection of books, drawings, autographs, and photographs. His library, valued, as we were publicly told, at 4000*l.*, was especially interesting from its variety and the origin of many of its volumes and treasures. As the intimate friend and to a great extent the colleague of such men as Longfellow, Emerson, Holmes, Curtis, Lowell, in America, of Darwin, FitzGerald, Carlyle, Clough, Ruskin, in England, as literary executor of Lowell and of Ruskin, Norton had necessarily amassed an almost unique collection of volumes, manuscripts, notes, and autographs. These, together with his inexhaustible reminiscences of such men as Darwin, Carlyle, Ruskin, and Stephen, made a quiet evening with him over his fireside in the library a thing not to be forgotten. If his home was a kind of literary consulate, his library was a kind of literary museum.

More important, perhaps, than his library treasures, with its portraits, curios, views, and manuscripts, were the invaluable estimates of men and things in America which he would offer to the new-comer. For my part, I arrived in the United States having a few American friends, but with a moderate understanding of parties, movements, politicians, and authorities. Norton was ready to explain, estimate, and criticise them all. Of course I knew that he was an old stalwart of the anti-slavery, anti-aggression, peace, and industrial reform parties. And it was not for me, an independent foreign observer, to pledge myself to either side in questions of purely domestic concern in the States. But as being an earnest opponent of the war against the South African Republics, of all forms of Imperial extension, as an old defender of the emancipation of labour without Socialism, I found myself in principle heartily with Norton.

I began my *Life of Ruskin* in the year of my American visit; and, as one who had already written several studies on Ruskin, whom I had visited at Brantwood shortly before his death, I found with Norton inexhaustible topics of common interest. I need not go into the well-known story of Norton's intimacy with Ruskin, extending over forty-six years. He was eminently aware of the weaker side of Ruskin's intellect and of his character, and perhaps Norton was the one man who ever could have corrected Ruskin's vagaries and given solidity to his effervescent imagination. It would have been well if Norton had been not only Ruskin's transatlantic correspondent and literary executor, but his elder brother, his tutor, and counsellor through life.

As to Carlyle, of course, Norton, who was a whole generation younger, and had never known the Prophet of Chelsea until he was an old man with his life-work completed, could only receive and not give, much less guide. But he did excellent service in making Carlyle understood and accepted in America, in spite of the monstrous heresies of the "Hero-King," the "millions, mostly fools," and pro-slavery doctrines. When Froude's volumes of *Carlyle's Reminiscences* and the *Life* had done much to shake faith in Carlyle's good faith and good feeling, Norton went far to restore the credit of Carlyle by reprinting a correct version of the *Letters*, which Froude had so strangely distorted and misunderstood. In the *Nineteenth Century*, April 1889, I wrote a short review of the new version of the *Letters*. The extraordinary discrepancies between Carlyle's authentic writings as shown by Norton and the garbled form in which Froude had presented them to the world almost amounts to one of the curiosities of modern literature. When Norton published the genuine *Letters*, it was

seen that Froude's version "alters the punctuation, words, and phrases; drops out whole sentences, paragraphs, and pages; rewrites passages in other words, and tacks together bits of passages into new sentences." Norton continued to defend Carlyle's character by means of documents and information supplied by Carlyle's niece. Instead of the famous saying of Carlyle's mother that he was ill to live with, it turned out that what the old lady said was that he was hard to deal with. We all knew that.

Norton's friendship for Leslie Stephen was quite a memorable example of what a literary intimacy may be, and may do, between men for long periods separated by 4000 miles. It began in Boston in 1863, and only ended forty years afterwards with Stephen's death, in 1904. Stephen's letters to Norton are set out in full in many a fascinating page of Professor Maitland's *Life*. The whole series tells us almost as much of Norton as of Stephen; and until we have Norton's letters before us, we in England can get no better glimpse into Norton's mind, interests, and nature than in the letters addressed to him by his English friend. The two, with all their points of difference, and these were many, were well matched. Both were essentially critical by temperament. Both, by slow and severe thought, had freed themselves, like Carlyle, from the strict Puritanism in which they had been born and reared. They had "come out of Houndsditch," as Carlyle said in his violent way; but both would be loth to use any such phrase of contempt. For, unlike Sartor, Stephen and Norton were intensely full of sympathy, and, as all fine critics do, they both found much to respect in the men and the ideas with which they had parted. Norton, like his English friend, had an ardent confidence in Progress as an end and in the future of the People in their respective

countries. And if Norton had no such immense literary activity as Stephen, and no such extended influence over the field of letters and the whole academic world, Norton had a passionate love of art, of poetry, of medieval devotion and charm which was almost a closed book to Stephen.

To bring to an end these brief reminiscences, if we tried to sum up in a phrase Norton's special gift, it lay, I think, in his power of discriminating sympathy. Norton's genius was at once critical and yet appreciative, incisive and enthusiastic. To combine both temperaments in equal force is rare. Many men are keen judges, able to probe errors and defects. Not a few are ardent lovers of causes and ideas. But sympathy is too often ready to cover failings, as criticism is too prone to exaggerate them. Norton was not easily satisfied, and he was far from being a friend of every one who pleased him, or a believer in every cause wherein he saw faith and hope. The sensitive nature of Ruskin exactly described the incalculable benefit he derived from intimacy with Norton. Ruskin wrote: "To me his infinitely varied and loving praise became a constant motive to exertion and aid in effort; yet he never allowed in me the slightest violation of the laws either of good writing or social prudence without instant blame or warning."

Many a man can say how Norton's loving and yet discriminating praise became to him a motive to action and aid in effort. When he saw real ground to encourage a political worker or a literary movement, his sympathetic cheer acted as an inspiration. For my own part, I remember how, about the time of the first Trades Union Commission in 1867, when a few of us were struggling against general and bitter opposition to have the claims of labour fairly heard, it was Norton's sympathy in letters to me which made

me feel that our cause was not hopeless, that we were not facing obloquy in vain. And in many a battle on behalf of justice, peace, and free thought, it was Norton's clear voice of Onward that made us work, trust, and hope.

CHAPTER XIX

RODIN

1912

In Art, as indeed in not a few other things, a powerful man of genius who invents a new type is a fatal snare to susceptible youth. He starts a reaction against some current form of which the age has grown weary; and forthwith in art, in books, or music, in collars, games, or slang—the young rush in to imitate the novelty, just as a flock of lambs will follow a bell-wether into a sunk ditch. The watch-word of the twentieth century is *Unrest* — Journalism, Politics, Literature, and Art ring with one cry—"All change here!" Not that it is often change for any definite gain. It is "change for the sake of a change," the thirst to get out of our old life, habits, thoughts, and pleasures, to get into new lives, new selves. It runs round England, Europe, America, Asia, and the World, like the dancing mania in the Middle Ages. We are all whirled along, thrust onward by the vast restless crowd, ever calling out for "something fresh" —"something up-to-date"—for the "last thing out!" *Omnes eodem cogimur.*

Even in former ages, before the universal thirst for change set in, the impulse of a potent genius often had a disastrous effect on his own art. What

academic mannerism followed the ideal compositions and bewitching poses of Raphael. As I write there stands before my eyes—it has stood so continuously since 1850—Volpato's fine engraving of Raphael's "School of Athens" in the Vatican Stanze. It has always been to me the perfect type of artful grouping of grand figures—the symbolic Olympus of antique thought—and yet by its very grace, by its symmetry, its severe dignity, equal to a drama of Sophocles, it heralds a long era of vapid elegance.

Michael Angelo, a far greater mind and a bigger nature, had an even more ruinous effect upon those who tried to obtain his power by copying his exaggeration. It took the French stage a century and a half to shake off the tragic traditions of Corneille and Racine; as it took English verse a century to recover from Pope and English prose fifty years to recover from Johnson and Gibbon. Victor Hugo's sensationalism ran to seed in *Monte Christo*, and Walter Scott's glorious romances led on to Bulwer and James. In music we got so cloyed with Mozart's melodies and Chopin's dulcimer tones that many flew to Wagner's crashing discords, as if robustious recitatives were a new avatar of Blood and Iron. Scott, Bulwer, Dickens, and Thackeray were voted to be both slow and longwinded; and then the smart world would read nothing but short stories about adultery and gold-bugs, or, it might be, a scrambling trip in a new Panhard. *Quisque suos patimur Manes—i.e.* every great man brings his bogey with him.

The new craze under which we are now suffering is the Cult of the Foul, or, to put it in Greek, it may be dubbed *Aischrolatreia*—worship or admiration of the Ugly, the Nasty, the Brutal. Poetry, Romance, Drama, Painting, Sculpture, Music, Manners, even Dress, are now recast to suit popular taste by adopting

forms which hitherto have been regarded as unpleasing, gross, or actually loathsome. To be refined is to be "goody-goody"; gutter slang is so "actual"; if a ruffian tramp knifes his pal, it is "so strong"; and, if on the stage his ragged paramour bites off a rival's ear, the half-penny press screams with delight. Painters are warned against anything "pretty," so they dab on bright tints to look like a linoleum pattern, or they go for subjects to a thieves' kitchen. The one aim in life, as in Art, is to shock one's grandmother. And when the Society woman dances in bare legs, the up-to-date girl can dress herself like a stable-lad.

A debasement so general and so violent must needs have an originating cause; and this will be found in two reasons—first, in the legitimate reaction against mawkish conventions; secondly, in the imitation of powerful examples. Both of these exist in a high degree. It is true that for about the second and third quarters of the nineteenth century, the dominant tone retained a strain of dull convention. It is ridiculous to call it Victorian—because it was more or less common to Europe and America, and in literature, drama, painting, sculpture, music, and certainly in dress, it was rather more French than English. Our good Lady who stiffly declined to be "fast," or even "smart," in anything had very little to do with it. Things were decorous, refined, and conventional, because it was an age of serious, decent, unimaginative men and women with a turn for science, social reform, and making things comfortable.

In the latter part of the nineteenth century several men of original genius made their influence felt over Europe—all of them more or less anarchic souls. About two generations after the death of Scott and of Goethe in 1832, the world of literature and art began to be stirred by Ibsen, Tolstoi, Zola, Gorkhi,

Wagner, Doré, Björnstjerne Björnson, d'Annunzio. All repudiated conventions and drove their scalpels deep down into the vitals of humanity. The Scandinavian and Mongol imagination revels in horrors, unnatural crimes, de-sexed women, and depraved and abnormal degenerates. The Latin races tend more to obscenity and gore. The world agrees that all those just named above were men of powerful genius, who have enriched their age with permanent masterpieces. The question remains if they have not encouraged weaker imitators to drag the type of Art down to the world of the crude, the cruel, the morbid, and the loathsome.

Foremost among the men of genius who are creating a new school in Europe stands Augustin Rodin, the author of that wonderful invention—Impressionist Sculpture. Rodin is a man of original genius, and most judges would call him the greatest living sculptor in Europe, and he is the leader of the most popular school of sculpture. He has certainly produced some works of marvellous power. His courage, his originality, his intelligence make him the idol of the younger artists, who see in him a new Michael Angelo. Not only do we note his influence in every art gallery in Europe, but he has formulated his canons of art in dogmatic and literary form. Like Leonardo, Buonarroti, and Cellini, he is not only a great artist, but a writer of distinction, at least his utterances are now embodied in books. One of these is *L'Art*, interviews recorded by Paul Gsell—a fine quarto volume with numerous photographs.*

Without attempting to offer any opinion about M. Rodin's fantasies in marble, as one of the plain people who cannot always grasp the mysticism under these veiled *ébauches* in plaster or stone, I can quite

* Paris, B. Grasset, 1911.

follow the doctrines laid down in the trenchant words of *L'Art*; for Rodin, who so often carves men and women as if they were seen in a fog, or behind a semi-transparent curtain, speaks with a clear and masterful voice which all can understand. The book altogether is exceedingly interesting, full of true and striking maxims, rich with apposite illustrations, and alive throughout with daring paradox. It enables us to know the man as well as his creations. And if it shows him to be a man of great original power, it explains the source of his gross extravagances, his caricatures which are called portraits, his love-dreams, and the crapulous nightmares he sometimes eternises in solid stone.

In the first chapter of *L'Art* Rodin expounds the key of his system. He opens with true and forcible protests against all kinds of academic pose. He simply seizes a spontaneous movement which he sees in his model. He does not place him or dictate any set attitude. Very good, but not quite true; for the *Danaid*, the *Last Appeal*, and the *Ugolino* (pp. 29, 32, 209) are certainly not casual and spontaneous attitudes. He goes on to say that he does not reproduce the *external surface* of what he sees, but the *inner spirit* of what he imagines beneath the surface. A cast will only give the outside form. Rodin moulds the underlying *truth*. "*I accentuate those lines which best express the spiritual state which I am interpreting.*" That is an exact description of the caricaturist. Rodin proclaims himself to be a systematic caricaturist. "Take my statue of the *Last Appeal*," he says, "here I overstrain the muscles which denote distress. Here and there I exaggerate the tension of the tendons which mark the spasm of prayer." The average eye sees the things within its vision. "The artist reads deep into the bosom of Nature."

Of course the real artist sees much that the ordinary eye does not see. But he does not see that which is not—and cannot be—there. He sees more than the vulgar eye can see. This, of course, is the meaning of all great portraiture. The most exact photograph reproduces the minutest mark or trait on a face, but it does not reproduce the expression in its highest significance. No photograph of the living Monna Lisa would have given us all that Leonardo saw in that mystical and unfathomable smile. But Leonardo did not paint what no eye ever saw or could have seen in the living Monna Lisa, in order to express his own views of the lady's private character. Leonardo painted what was there, and showed the world what they might see if they had an artist's eye.

It is a quite different thing when we come to the sculptor's art, and are dealing with representations of the nude human body. One who puts into marble the appearance of the nude torso and limbs of man has no right to mould on his marble surface that which never was, and never could be, on the living skin. In vain he tells us that he brings out and stamps upon the surface or skin of his figure's torso and limbs the "spiritual state" inside the organs, "the interior truth" which he takes to be covered up in the outside show. Sculpture is an art of *surfaces* as painting is not. A statue is the exact facsimile of a human figure — made motionless, rigid, and self-coloured, so that by a stage device a living person can be mistaken for a statue. A statue professes to be the exact copy of a living figure in everything but movement and colour. The sculptor who moulds on his surface what does not exist on any living surface is a caricaturist.

This doctrine of presenting the "spiritual truth" in sculpture, not the visible realism, is carried out

in Rodin's figures where he "exaggerates muscles," "overstrains tendons" in order to express ideas which are latent and not visible in fact. The *Last Appeal* is a youth on his knees "torn with anguish," and the arms flung upwards and backwards in convulsions, as they might be in epilepsy, or in the horrible surgical study of *Opisthotonos* in Sir Charles Bell's book, *The Anatomy of Expression*, Essay VII. Again, in the *Ugolino*, perhaps the most ghastly subject which could be chosen for sculpture, the emaciated father is bending down to gnaw his dead son, like a famished beast. One fails to see where the "spiritual truth" comes in with this bestial group. Then, the *Danaid* is turning a somersault in a mud-bath, apparently presenting the *nates* for surgical examination. All of these not only reek with morbid exaggeration, but are morally and physically loathsome.

Being loathsome enough to shock any grandmother, indeed almost loathsome enough to make a decent person sick, and being full of profound anatomical learning, and also of glyptic genius, these novelties are hailed as a new revelation by the youthful enthusiast who would be "up-to-date." Bestiality seems to be carried to its highest limit in the statue called *La Vieille Heaulmière*, of which a photograph is given at p. 40. The name, a word not current in French, is adopted from a ballad of that fifteenth-century jail-bird, Villon, and means The Old Strumpet. Well! She is represented as an emaciated and diseased hag looking down on her mummified body, shrivelled limbs, and draggled dugs, with shame and horror. M. Rodin's gushing friend sets out the beastly little poem of Villon, and says that the sculptor has even surpassed the poet—*oculis submissa fidelibus*—by the horrible realism of this shrunken nudity. He goes into raptures over "the knotted limbs," "the pen-

dant teats," "the scarred abdomen," and the "wrinkled skin, dropping in shreds like bits of parchment." "No artist," he says, "ever yet showed us a naked hag with a crudity so ferocious." Probably not; but those who care for such a spectacle might visit a dissecting table in a surgery or a riverside mortuary in the East End. He could there find some such pitiable human wreck, and might discover for himself the "spiritual truth," "the inner moral" of it all, without the help of M. Rodin. The lesson of debauchery ending in corruption is one for morals, religion, science—not for Art. The *Heaulmière* as a statue is the last word of moral, physical, artistic degradation.

M. Rodin has certainly parted with conventional prettiness—your Venus, Cupids, and Apollos—but surely in too violent a rebound. He would be invaluable to illustrate a scientific work on morbid anatomy—where even "exaggeration" and the "inner truth" might be useful to students. In that most interesting book by Sir Charles Bell, *The Anatomy and Philosophy of Expression* (my copy is the sixth edition, 1872), there are some striking plates with the great surgeon's types of violent passions, agonies, and disease. These are Weeping, Laughter, Pain, Convulsions, Hydrophobia, Terror, Despair, Rage, and Madness. These powerful designs express what, from the point of view of anatomy and surgery, these distortions of the human countenance are in real fact. They are instructive to students of medicine, and indeed to students of art. But they are not art, for they give not pleasure but disgust. Rodin's distortions, for all his exaggerations, are not nearly so real and true as the surgeon's work, but they are sufficiently true to disease and debasement to be horribly loathsome.

To answer this charge which his admirer repeats,

Rodin says *equitibus canoI*—*i.e.* My work is for connoisseurs—and he then argues with truth and eloquence that a great artist, like a great poet, can transfigure the *ugly* and the *horrible* into grand works of art. And he cites Velazquez, Michael Angelo, Donatello, and Millet, Dante, Shakespeare, and Racine. No one denies the terrible power of the Sistine frescoes, of the *Laocoon*, of Botticelli's illustrations to the *Inferno*. As to poetry, and even painting, the conditions are different from those of sculpture. Michael Angelo's sublime frescoes or his *Notte* may have a terrible element, but they are grand, and not disgusting. Donatello's *Magdalene* is pathetic, and not loathsome. And as to Millet's *Angelus*, or his *Glaneuses*, they are full of the most subtle and exquisite grace. *The Peasant with the Hoe* is a composition as full of dignity as of simplicity. Yes! Millet's work really transforms the plainest and rudest labourers into figures radiant with the glory of simple Nature. That is the magic of true art. But Rodin's coarse types remain ugly brutes. And his *Old Strumpet* is nothing but a naked hag.

Great as Rodin is as sculptor, he often in this book appears even as literary critic rather than artist, sometimes almost as poet. He says some fine, true, and useful things. But when he handles his clay and begins to put his ideas of Nature into form, the craze for the ugly, the grotesque, and the morbid seems to overpower his sense of beauty, and with all his genius, his power, and his superb technical gifts, he produces too often caricatures not masterpieces. No judge of art, whether he sits in the ranks of the "*Knights*" or of the *Plebs* in the pit, denies that an artist can make a beautiful work out of the plainest and the commonest themes. Murillo and Velazquez did, Millet did, Israels did. But he must issue in beautiful and noble

works of art, not in facsimiles of what is repulsive and nauseous. Now the *John the Baptist* of Rodin is an over-trained and coarse-limbed boxer in an ungainly attitude. The feet and hands may be "true," but they are unsightly ; the Prophet's head is fine, but sits oddly on a stark-naked athlete. The *Burghers of Calais* has some powerful figures, and from the literary point of view it is an original and telling conception. And men of letters who know nothing of sculpture as an art are telling us it is a masterpiece. But one or two of the figures are in grotesque and ludicrous attitudes. Perhaps when they came before Edward the Third with halters round their necks they did not look graceful. But we trust they did not look absurd. Rodin has exerted his powers of caricature in making them ungainly mummers fit to make a crowd laugh.

Rodin, the romancer *à la* Hugo, is constantly carrying away the imagination of Rodin the sculptor. Unnatural monstrosities, nightmares, and Zolaesque and Doré-esque fantasies crowd his fertile brain—for he is a real poet—and they seize his hand when he begins to model. Blake was like this—but Blake was more the poet than the artist ; Leonardo even had a love of grotesque. But there is nothing either laughable or disgusting in Leonardo or in Blake, whatever monstrosity crossed their brain ; and they were painters, not sculptors. But Rodin's *Female Centaur* is monstrous, and ugly, and laughable all at once. His *Faun and Nymph* is coarse and absurd. Whatever of the monstrous, the unnatural, the morbid is possible in literature, even in painting, sculpture, with its definite solidity, its objective fixity, its tangible permanence, rejects such horrors from its sphere. We can imagine in poetry Satans, Apollyons, Minotaurs, Dragons, and Ghosts, and even may have them on canvas or in etchings, but they are impracticable and

silly when fashioned in the objective solidity of marble. The bloody sockets of Œdipus or the snaky tresses of the Furies would not be tragic in stone. And even Rodin's genius could hardly convince us if he tried to make a statue of Banquo's ghost. It is a fatal snare when a man of genius in more than one domain loses all sense of the motives, limits, and conditions of the different arts.

The radical sophism on which much of Rodin's art is built is that which infects some things of Ibsen, Zola, Gorkhi, at times even of Tolstoi, and the small fry of the brutalising Decadence. It is the dogma that there is nothing in Nature—nothing visible—which is not a fitting subject for art, that when the artist presents in vivid words or form what he has seen, or can see, it is for the world to admire, and no one can complain. The most repulsive, unnatural, unmentionable act or sight, when represented with striking truth, becomes, they say, a work of art, and, according to Rodin, beautiful by its artistic power. This is an absurd sophism. Every hour of every day, in every street, or house, or room, with every man, woman, child, or animal, in every hospital, prison, mortuary, or battle-field, are infinite sights which cannot be shown in art. Of all the arts, that of sculpture is the art least tolerant of anything obscene or loathsome. A great poet in a lofty spirit of idealism can typify in verse almost anything. Michael Angelo and Correggio have in painting idealised the myths of Leda and of Ixion, and both experiments have been much condemned. But one may defy Rodin himself to make marble groups which should literally represent —say the last line of Canto XXI. of the *Inferno* or line 500 of the fourth book of *Paradise Lost*.

Any one who tries to work it out can see that tens of thousands of things which in Nature are common,

familiar, inevitable, and secret, cannot be expressed in permanent marble shape, and the nearer the sculptor gets to them, the nearer he is to that which disgusts. Rodin sometimes tries to get as close as he dare, and so do others of the decadent schools of literature and art. But he has not the courage of his convictions, and he has not yet literally carved any really bestial act or sight. Being a man, like Cellini, of brilliant literary power, he professes to be absolutely free of all conventions. But he is not free. He does not go far enough to practise his own theories. Feeling—and very wisely feeling—how lifeless a study is the model, rigidly posed upon a stand, he causes both male and female models to move about his studio nude and in spontaneous action, so that he can observe them in continual movement. That is very well, and is the source of the vitality of so many of his studies. But it is not enough. If he could get his nude models to run, leap, wrestle in sunlight on an open sward, to play quoits, football, golf, and a tug-of-war, as the Greeks did in the arena, M. Rodin would have incredible opportunities for study, and would be true to his own maxims. But unfortunately, modern conventions make all this practically impossible, and they bind Rodin as much as any one.

If M. Rodin had less imagination, not such a flow of literary and poetic originality, he would be a greater sculptor. He would restrain his exuberant fancy within the inevitable limits of his own special art. He insists that what he can imagine, or dream, or recall in memory, he can carve in stone. He will not obey the maxim—*segnius irritant animos demissa per aurem*—things we can bear to read of in words cannot be borne face to face fixed in cold and solid stone. Milton can create a Satan; Shakespeare a Caliban; Shelley a Prometheus—but Satan, Caliban, or Prome-

theus would be grotesque in marble. Rodin seems to live in a dreamland, and not always in a sane dreamland, for his dreams are often nightmares, and ghoulish abominations. But since dreams are vague, shadowy, evanescent, they can only be put into plastic form by being blurred, half-shown, sketched in the rough, as if just begun. The objective, tangible definiteness of statuary makes any attempt to carve a dream a foolish paradox. You might as well try to keep a verse of poetry ringing in your ears for hours together. Dreams and marble statues are incommensurable—not *in pari materia*. You might as well try to put a sonata of Beethoven in a glass case for exhibition, or to carve one of Turner's sunsets in stone.

And then the portraits—diabolically clever, but rank caricatures. M. Rodin's way to make the portrait of a famous man is to twist his features up into a look which seems to suggest the character he attributes to his sitter. He knows perfectly well that the unlucky victim of his joke never did, or could, look like that. But it symbolises the inner nature of the man; or, like a nickname, it suggests the trait of character that is imputed to him. That is pure caricature; it is what Sir Francis Gould does with us, and what Caran d'Ache did in France. Having got the clay bust into a general resemblance of the features, the cheeks are pinched up and puffed out as if after a prize-fight, and gobbets are stuck on to the forehead and nose to represent scars, seams, wrinkles, and varicose veins. The sitter may have some such marks in his face, but these the sculptor magnifies to double or treble. They "give character"—and are caricature. Where clothes are shown they have to be carved as if they were sackcloth daubed with tar. Naturally, Puvis de Chavannes did not like his bust; and the Balzac Committee repudiated the Guy-Fawkes mannikin which was offered to them.

One hopes that Dalou, Falguière, and Laurens took it meekly. When Rodin began on a sitter, he likened him to some animal, and impressed on him that type. Falguière was "a little bull with an eruptive character, a grumbling moustache, and a visage seamed with furrows." So his bust appears in the photograph; but the illustrious sculptor looks like a boxer. Rodin seems to associate intellect with pugilism. His famous *Penseur* is the gladiator of the Municipal Museum of Rome; and the *Victor Hugo* is a sort of Hercules preparing to overthrow Antæus. All this is excellent caricature, but it is not true art.

Morbid exaggeration is the unerring mark of decadence, just as the Pergamenian or Rhodian schools of Hellenistic art exaggerated the athletic type of Lysippus. The example of this is the *Farnese Hercules* at Naples, which is now recognised as false art, in spite of its anatomical science. And Rodin pushes the decadence of the Hellenistic sculpture till it becomes grotesque.

Augustin Rodin is a man of rare genius, of original imagination, a poet, an orator, a critic—a great sculptor. He has done some grand, some beautiful things, many stimulating things. But with all his audacity and his powers, he has a morbid love for that which is either repulsive or impossible. And he must exert a fatal influence on those who are carried away by his genius and seek to imitate his brilliant gifts.

CHAPTER XX

CENTENARIES

1909

In this age of Centenaries is not a laudable custom in danger of being overdone? This *annus mirabilis*, 1909, brings us round to the birthdays of four great Englishmen—Darwin, Tennyson, Johnson, Gladstone—to say nothing of others, such as Calvin and Paine, who have been commemorated by their respective admirers. What with aviation "records," rival Budgets, and Halley's Comet, we can hardly live up to the incessant sensations which race across our thoughts like flying men at Brookwood in a gale. I see more centenaries coming along soon—Charles Dickens, Thackeray, to be followed by Shakespeare himself. Now I have a proposal to offer which will greatly mitigate this stormburst of centenaries, which pelt us like November meteors—coming and going before we have recovered breath.

In one word, my suggestion is to limit our commemorations to the centenary only of the death, not of the birth, of our worthies. This would reduce the number of these festivals by two-thirds at least, besides being more truly historic and rational. Centenaries are being preposterously multiplied. And the com-

memoration of the birth of any but of supernatural beings is illogical from the point of view of sound sociology.

It is obvious that, if we celebrate only the death, but never the birth, of our great men, we at once strike off one-half of these occasions. But we should strike off many more. If we wait till a hundred years have passed since our great man went from us, we should find sometimes that posterity would not judge the occasion quite so memorable. Two-thirds of these centenaries would answer themselves, as Napoleon said his letters did when he locked them in his cabinet for a month. They might have local, or special, but not national commemoration. By all means let Little Pedlington and Little Bethel glorify their former mayor or pastor, if his memory keeps green a hundred years after his decease. But the nation would not be roused into enthusiasm by orations, and dunned with subscription lists week after week.

Celebrate only the hundredth anniversary of a memorable death, and we should not have superior persons cynically sneering at a noble custom. It is the miscellaneous and interminable recurrence of these occasions which calls out the irony of Culture. In this age of longevity the centenary of the birth of our hero follows too closely upon the actual date of his death. We have hardly recovered from the emotions of a grand national funeral, with various local celebrations, as the fashion is to-day, before we are asked to renew our lyrical elegies and our epideictic eulogies. The funeral bak'd words do coldly furnish forth the centenary feast. Why! the other day dear old Garcia in person attended the centenary festival of his own birth! It reminded me of Darwin's old Patagonian woman, whom he saw walk in procession to her own funeral. This wet year we have been surfeited with lamenta-

tions or jubilees of the mighty dead. One might think the angels in chorus had been raining tears upon our island.

Take the case of the three great Englishmen who were born in 1809. Many of us knew them in the flesh, have talked with them, eaten with them, seen them, and heard them for years, and finally, but a few years ago, saw them all laid to rest in the Abbey. They are as present to us in memory as our own fathers. We heard all that had to be said of their achievements but a few years since; we exhausted our own sympathies about them and their work; we have nothing fresh to say, nothing more to learn of them! And lo! before those living pages of our memory are turned, we find a fresh, and somewhat belated, commemoration thrust upon us. When a hundred years shall have passed from their respective deaths—in 1982, 1992, 1998—Darwin, Tennyson, Gladstone will be duly honoured by a generation which never saw them, knew them only by books, and can judge them more clearly through the illuminating halo of an entire century. But for all of us to-day who are long past middle life, it is too early to ask us to treat as ancient history the men whom we have known in life as friends, associates, teachers, and prophets.

From the point of view of scientific history, it is always the death, not the birth, of a great genius which concerns after ages. At their birth absolutely nothing happened; no man observed anything; no one was in the least degree affected. The world rolled round without a shadow of change, except that one more helpless infant was added to its millions of possible men and women. There was no special reason, unless it were a Royal prince, to mark the place, or the day, or the surroundings of the birth of another child, which in most cases was perfectly

ordinary, and sometimes obscure. Did heaven ring and earth shake when a rather thriftless tradesman at Stratford, in April 1564, had a third child? The very day is still not quite certain. Did England rejoice, or Whitehall groan, when, in April 1599, a quiet gentleman at Huntingdon had born to him the fifth of his ten children? Even little Huntingdon was not stirred by the event. But on September 3, 1658, the three kingdoms were shaken to their inmost depth —nay, all Europe drew a long breath.

In the evolution of a nation, of the human race, the birth of a great man is nothing. It is the end of his life, the close of his career, his posthumous influence which the generations to come need treasure in their mind. The centenary of birth in many cases follows so closely upon the actual death that the interval is too short, and often the facts are still too little known, to make any true judgment of the man and his work clear beyond doubt or dispute. The hundredth anniversary of Mr. Gladstone's birth will have to be commemorated, alas! in the midst of a fierce conflict still raging between his own friends, colleagues, rivals, opponents, within but eleven short years since he was buried in the Abbey by the nation, whilst the fires that he lighted up are still blazing round us, and hot words are still bandied about over his half-closed grave. Were it not better that the centenary should wait until 1998, when all that England, Scotland, and Ireland owes to him can be recorded in the dry light of historic time?

One sees how the hundredth anniversary of birth came to be commonly accepted as the memorable date. Christendom dates everything naturally from the Nativity. *Anno Domini* is to us the familiar almanac for all events. Romans dated from the birth of their city; and monks often dated from the Creation of

the world. Divine, supernatural, mythical births stand on a different ground. When the "Heav'n-born childe" lay in the manger, Nature was in awe and "Kings sate still, with awfull eye." That was indeed an event. But even to Christians Easter comes with far more reality as a religious power than does Christmas. The birth of the Heir to a Throne may partake of this national importance. For all others it is death, not birth, which really counts.

May I add that no man values more than I do myself the adequate commemoration of a great man's life? Few men have laboured more earnestly in the various celebrations of our time. For ten years I worked to secure, and finally, in 1901, we achieved, the millenary of Alfred. I have taken active part in the centenaries of Cromwell, Chatham, Tennyson, Ruskin, and many others. Our own small body for thirty years continuously celebrated the centenaries of the worthies in our calendar. In the volume of biographies of 558 heroes of all ages and races we have sought to bring home to contemporaries what they owe to the genius and the services of the men of old time. Humanity owes reverence to its ancestors as a social and even as a religious duty. But it is only when posterity can calmly weigh the entire posthumous influence of their lives as a whole.

CHAPTER XXI

MY REISEBILDER—OLD AND NEW

1911

I AM now an old traveller, for my experience of Continental cities began sixty-seven years ago, when there were no railways between Paris and the coast, when Rome, Florence, and Vienna were walled cities under reactionary rulers. Those were the days of Pio Nono, Ferdinand the First, Louis Philippe, and the Grand Dukes. In 1845, 1846, and 1847, I spent the autumn in Picardy and Normandy, living with French families in the old Provincial days, and driving about the country from village to village, and from farm to farm. And in 1851 I travelled through Belgium, up the Rhine, and thence across South Germany, all through Switzerland, and then by North Italy, and home by Dijon and Paris, mainly by road in each country. Since 1851 there have been few years in which I have not spent a month or more in France, Germany, Austria, and Italy, and of later years in the North seas, or in Holland, Spain, Greece, and Turkey.

These sixty or seventy years cover the enormous changes that have taken place from the development of steam by rail and ship, the vast social and industrial revolution that set in after the year of political revolution in 1848, and the portentous rise of Germany to

the hegemony of Europe. When I first knew France under Louis Philippe, Guizot and Marshal Soult, the opponent of Wellington in Spain, were in power; Louis Napoleon was a prisoner at Ham; the Emperor Napoleon's widow, and his brother Jerome, were still living; and his body had only just been restored to France. In things visible, and to some extent in things political and social, France was much as it had been at the Restoration of Louis the Eighteenth in 1815. The only means of locomotion was by diligence, post-chaises, or the ponderous hooded gig. Each department, almost each village, had its local costumes and manners; the old provincial life as described by Balzac, Hugo, Erckmann-Chatrian, was in full career with its markets, fairs, pardons, and pilgrimages. The churches and cathedrals were still undefiled by the hand of the restorer, and they were full of honest worshippers.

Sixty years ago every village was a new picture, a fresh romance. Ah! the dour picturesque fisher-folk of Calais, Dieppe, Boulogne, Havre, Honfleur, and all the ports along the coast of Picardy and Normandy. Trouville was a rude seaside camp where I saw men and women who walked from their cottages straight into the sea and tramped about the sands till they were dry; Cannes was a pretty fishing village, with a couple of villas on the hills; Nice and Mentone were old Italian towns, and Monte Carlo was an orange-garden. What delicious picnics we had on the Liane and the Orne, then like the Cherwell and the Isis, now defiled with furnaces and chimneys belching forth poisonous fumes. The markets of Boulogne or Caen, Bayeux or Rouen, were glowing and moving panoramas of quaint costume, manners, and appliances, such as Prout and Turner loved to paint, and Béranger to sing of. We, of those unsophisticated days, saw foreign parts as Byron

saw them, or Heine, or young Ruskin, as Sterne and Goldsmith, Thackeray and Hawthorne and Landor, once knew them, in their warm glow and infinite variety of colour and form. The glow, the variety, the local colour, are all gone! Railroads, factories, steam, electricity, the Press, the density of population, the growth of cities, the change from rural to urban life, the closing up of the earth, the crowding out of clear and open spaces, the assimilation of European peoples to a common type, a commonplace type, have taken the charm and the freshness out of foreign travel. We are told now, if we want a change of scene in a holiday, we should "try Uganda," gallop round the globe in sixty days, or risk our lives in an airship.

When I first tramped the Alps in 1851, we passed through Belgium, visited Cologne and the Rhine cities, flung away a crown at the gambling casino of Baden-Baden, drove through the Black Forest, crossed the mountain-chains of the Oberland and the Pennines, descended into the Lombard valleys and round Mont Blanc, back to Geneva, and thence over the Jura into Burgundy. These six countries had different languages, coinage, laws, habits, costumes, and religions. It was a perpetual joy to find new ways and scenes in each, and a general air of peace and goodfellowship. There had then been no European war for thirty-six years, and there was a vague sense that war between nations was a thing of the past. The turmoil of 1848-49, when retrograde thrones had fallen, was then quieted down. There was no sense of bitterness between nations which was apparent to a traveller. Half-a-dozen different languages could be heard in a public carriage, and German, French, Swiss, Italian, and English chatted pleasantly side by side in the long tables d'hôte, and compared their experiences or discussed the scenery and the local habits.

Both the peace and the contrasts have now ceased. Men of different nations keep to their fellow-countrymen. Public and national questions are never discussed in public; the table d'hôte has been replaced by the separate tables, from which those of different nations or different class stare coldly at each other. The same stale, faked imitations of Paris Boulevard *menus* are dished up to us at German baths, Alpine Grand Hôtels, Riviera *Mètropoles* — on the slopes of Vesuvius, in sight of the Golden Horn, or under the shadow of the Pyramids. We can never get away from the dreary round of food, furniture, dress, habits, and amusements which the caterers and traders impose on us alike on the Thames, the Seine, the Elbe, the Danube, the Neva, or the Nile—amidst the majesty of the Alps, and the loveliness of Italy, the solitude of the desert, or the poetry of Hellas.

Coelum—non victum—mutant qui trans mare currunt.

Europe has been standardised — brought to one dull conventional pattern—and that although each nation is watching the others as showmen watch their performing lions and tigers. We are all made to look as much alike and to live as much alike one another as if we came out of the same family, and all the while we suspect the foreign man as a possible enemy or rogue. It is nonsense now to talk about a tour abroad being "a change." We see just what we see at home — rather more so, perhaps — folk rather smarter, rather less vulgar, not quite so Cockney, but otherwise life is much the same at Homburg as at Harrogate, at Scarborough as at Naples. If we had all grown into a millennial brotherhood it might be a thing to be proud of. But to have settled into one dull regulation fashion, whilst being full of suspicion at heart, is not so noble

a result. In my old age I retain my love of foreign travel, but I like to be spared the eternal scramble for a new room night after night, the bore of packing, catching trains, and registering baggage. I have taken to these cruising yachts which are growing into fashion, so that one can visit many cities on the coast without changing one's room for a month. Of late years I have been in Spain to Cadiz, Gibraltar, Granada, and Malaga; in Portugal to Lisbon and Cintra; in Turkey and Greece to Constantinople, Smyrna, and Brusa, to Athens and Corinth; and round the great cities of the Mediterranean. And this year I took the run up to the capitals of the North—Amsterdam, Christiania, Stockholm, Copenhagen, and St. Petersburg. Most of the Mediterranean, French, and Dutch cities I have long known well, and am now mainly interested in revisiting museums, churches, and ancient buildings. In a short cruise of the kind one gathers little but general impressions — snap-shots at the outside of things. But even snap-shots over a great and varied series of scenes have a certain value of their own. And I proceed to note a few of these.

First and foremost is the universal levelling-up of all European peoples—the adoption of common habits and dress. Men and women engaged in hard manual labour still retain some minor differences of local costume; although even these are small now, and unobtrusive. But in every country of Europe the middle-class people, down to those just above manual crafts, have uniform style of dress and nearly the same habits of life. If you want to find national costumes in the well-to-do persons in the streets, they must be looked for north of Christiania, St. Petersburg, or south-east of Buda-Pesth and Athens. Anywhere south of St. Petersburg or west of Athens

there is little to denote nationality, at any rate among people of the class of lower shopkeepers, clerks, and smaller business occupations. Of course the richer, cultured, and highly-educated people of all European nations conform to French standards, if women, and to English, if men. That fact has long been familiar to us all, whether we travel or meet foreigners at home. But the assimilating process has now completely absorbed all classes in all countries down as far as the workmen and their wives. A sempstress, a shop-girl, a teacher, will now look much the same in Paris, in London, in Christiania, in Naples, in Amsterdam, in Athens, or in St. Petersburg. A typist, violinist, art student, or milliner will have the precise cut of skirt, collar, sleeve, and hat which the *Daily Mirror* or the *New York Herald* assures us pictorially to be essential to the man or woman who respects himself or herself. A "general" maid of housework, whether in Copenhagen or in Lisbon, will get as near to a hobble-skirt or a picture-hat as her wages and her avocations permit. This identity of dress may seem a petty, unimportant detail, but it is the outward and visible sign of a great assimilation of life and ideas underneath the surface. It implies a curious similarity of interest, education, manners. This results mainly from the enormous diffusion and activity of the Press, the simultaneous exchange of information through the telegraph, the rapid locomotion caused by infinite railroads and steam-vessels. As our planet has been closed up, shrunk in extent, and unified within two generations, so has Europe been brought into common life. Whatever happens at one end of it is known to the man in the street in a few hours all over the continent. Politically, nations may be as wide apart as ever. Indeed, some of them are fiercely suspicious and hostile. But for social,

economical, and industrial purposes, Europe is getting to be one population.

The immediate and decisive result of this is what abroad they call *the solidarity of Labour*. Social and industrial movements—what they name "unrest" by a convenient euphemism—fly round Europe, and indeed America, without any regard to national frontiers. For some years now we have seen this growing, and we are likely to see it grow. The working classes have a different influence on their respective governments in different nations. But in all nations, at least of Western and Northern Europe, they have the same aspirations and opinions, and are more and more learning to act in concert. The reason is that by the enormous development of means of locomotion and of information, they can easily pass from place to place, and are daily supplied with the same news. For some purposes the Roman Empire made one people from the Euphrates to the Tyne. And for economic and industrial purposes, the Press, the rail, the steam-ship, and the telegraph have made Europe one.

In our recent cruise, when we landed in the capitals of five different nations, we found everywhere the tale of Labour strikes and "unrest," either actually present, or in recent experience, or in probable outlook. At Christiania or in Stockholm, the men on the quays knew what was doing on the Thames or the Tyne quite as fully as men knew on the Clyde or the Mersey. What with Marconigrams, telegrams, the post, and the Press, we on board ship never got behind the news of the day. We might be out of sight of land in the North Sea or the Baltic, but we never lost touch with Europe or Britain. The "wireless" report every noon kept us well up to date. At St. Petersburg the local daily

paper gave us all the essential facts known throughout Europe to within the hour of "going to press"; and on the third day we read the dailies published in London. As in mid-ocean one has nothing to do but to read and amuse oneself, some of us had more time to study the news than when we were busy at home.

In my early days, no doubt, I could not have submitted to so superficial a mode of travelling abroad as that of touching at five capitals in a few weeks. But in my old age, when my object is to revisit well-known scenes and museums, or to compare a variety of impressions, the cruising system satisfies my idea of a holiday. I have always loved the south more than the north. Years ago I had planned a trip to the Fjords of Norway; but bad weather and the late season turned me southwards, and, in fact, when the day to start came, I went to Florence. As one great end of travelling is to find the beautiful, the picturesque, the historic, the sublime in nature and in art, this preference is instinctive and has ample justification.

If one sails from the Thames north-east into Scandinavia and the Gulf of Finland, the sense of things beautiful seems to fade away with a perpetual *diminuendo*. Belgium and Holland are countries rich with ancient memorials and great art, glowing with colour and picturesque incidents at every corner, with five or six centuries of memorable achievement —part of the great European movement since the Middle Ages. Van Eyck, Rubens, Vandyke, Rembrandt, F. Hals, Cuyp, and Wouwermans, the ancient churches, town halls, palaces, and castles, seem indigenous and spontaneous products. They fill the mind and delight the eye even of those who know best France, Italy, and Spain. But as we

pass up by sea from the continent into Scandinavia, the Danish islands, and the Baltic, the historic tradition seems to grow thinner and more recent. It is a world which, for all we see to-day, seems to have begun with the seventeenth century. Beauty of scene and of art, colour, and grace fade away together. Bleak rocks, crude ornaments, ungainly edifices are too common and look native and unimprovable.

Copenhagen, it is true, stands on a noble range of islets and has grand sea-channels, and the genius of Thorwaldsen seems to have stamped upon it a classical tradition. Its new museum and the Glyptothek are really amongst the great collections of Europe. Copenhagen, with its beautiful site, its picturesque streets, and its new Attic halls, does something to carry on the charm of Holland—*longo intervallo*—with rather recent traditions and art. But as we pass farther north there comes a cold and scanty look over the landscape, a monotony of foliage, a flatness of coast, and a crudity of ornament which, like any barbarous art, seeks quaintness, not grace; intricacy, not harmony; glaring tones, not rest and mellowness. The eastern coasts of Norway and of Sweden have neither beauty nor character; and the northern coasts of Russia seem to be nothing but monotonous and dreary steppes. One fancies that the flat, dull, melancholy aspect of Holy Russia accounts for the sad cheerless air of the poorer folk, who look as if they carried on a life-long struggle to get food, air, and rest.

One of the most interesting facts in modern development is the way in which the genius of Thorwaldsen has stamped itself on the art of modern Denmark, for one must count the New Glyptothek as due to the impulsion to high art given by the

famous Dane. Of course, the vogue of the neo-classic sculpture is on the wane, and I fear that a visit to the singular museum where the sculptor lies in his tomb, surrounded by his works, in some degree explains this. The idea of a great artist lying entombed in what is at once a vast mausoleum and also a gallery of his whole life achievements, promises to be both original and magnificent. In cold truth the impression is not at all what one could hope. The sarcophagus standing in an exaggerated Etruscan tomb, a sort of Doric temple, is surrounded, not by a careful selection of his best work and not by marble originals, but by a miscellaneous collection of all his works indiscriminately, and the great majority of them in plaster casts. Thorwaldsen, like almost every artist who became popular and fashionable, often turned out from his studio and pupil-room works very much below his best, and unfortunately we see his tomb surrounded by some of his best and much of his worst. Besides this, every one knows how much replicas, copies, and casts deaden the impression left by the original marble. The *Theseus* of Phidias or the *Aphrodite* of Melos fail to enchant us in plaster. Now, most of us who care for sculpture have seen a good many of Thorwaldsen's best in the original marble, and it is disappointing to see beside his bones so many of his worst in copies and casts.

On the other hand, to those who follow out the history of modern art it is deeply interesting to find collected in a single museum the entire product of an artist of extraordinary fertility, who undoubtedly exercised an immense influence on his country and his age. One sees how a noble genius became more or less infected by his own success, a fate which overtook Vandyke, Reynolds, and even Raphael himself—in our own age Sir Walter Scott, Dickens, and Thackeray.

The serene genius of Athene subsides into memorials to grandees, church decoration, and orders that pay well.

But, after all, Thorwaldsen is a noble figure in modern art. His reliefs, at any rate, justify the enthusiasm which they once aroused in Europe. If Canova's fame did him harm in the end, Thorwaldsen's earlier work will stand in the forefront of modern art. With our own Flaxman, he is one of the restorers of a sense of antique purity of conception. Those who care most for the true antique best know how far short of Phidias and Praxiteles was Thorwaldsen even at his highest. But he deserves study now that the art of sculpture is rudely invaded by the craze for brutal realism—sculpture which of all the arts is the most antipathetic to realism in any case. Photography, democracy, and a morbid passion for what is gross, common, obscene, or loathsome are poisoning poetry, romance, painting, music, and now even sculpture. Those who go into raptures over the "literal truth" of a hag with pendant dugs scratching her nude back, may stand beside the grave of Thorwaldsen and watch his *Mercury*, his *Jason*, his *Night and Morning*, and feel the air a little sweeter and less mephitic.

The influence of Thorwaldsen's art must have inspired the noble gift of the Glyptothek Museum—one of the most splendid benefactions in modern Europe. Would that some of our own brewers would imitate the munificence of Carl Jacobsen! The collection with which his taste and public spirit have enriched his country is as valuable in its way as any in modern Europe. In its best form it is not long completed. It would justify a visit to Copenhagen to those who have not been to that city in recent years. With the fine new National Museums this Glyptothek places Copenhagen almost in the front rank of European

collections. For myself, I do not hesitate to claim the internal arrangement of the classical works in the Glyptothek, where statues are placed between the columns, as the very best gallery in which works of antique art can be properly seen and judged. Excepting our Parthenon Hall in the Museum and the Greek Museum at Athens, there is nothing so effective as the Glyptothek central hall either in London, Paris, Munich, Berlin, Naples, or Rome. This is a real triumph for a small northern country such as Denmark.

Copenhagen, indeed, like Stockholm and Christiania, has many splendid points of view and striking and most interesting buildings. But to those who know the ancient cities of Europe and the palaces and cathedrals of France, Italy, South Germany, and Spain, all three northern capitals have an air of being at once modern and exotic. In all these cities the picturesque old boat or carriage service is now replaced by new launches, steam-tenders, trams, and motor taxis. The great buildings are more or less recent imitations of European styles. There is almost nothing of importance that takes one's mind back to anything mediæval. Here and there we are reminded of Vikings and old sea-kings; but, on the whole, Denmark, Norway, and Sweden seem only to have emerged into national life at earliest in the second half of the sixteenth century. There is little whatever that is Pre-Reformation, and all through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries they called in foreign architects from France, Italy, or Germany, and adopted some fantastic variety of later Renascence or even hybrid Rococo art.

The noble city of Stockholm is so deeply saturated with its worship of the heroic Gustavus and his followers and successors that one sees almost no trace of any earlier history. One grand mediæval church does indeed remain, and serves to deepen the impres-

sion of the modernity of the rest of the city. The "Knight's House" Church, with its early-pointed arches and pure Gothic aisles, survives as a pathetic memorial of the past, and links up the present with distant ages. The Westminster Abbey of Stockholm is indeed a tomb worthy of the Swedish heroes.

But if Copenhagen, Stockholm, and Christiania look quite recent and rather exotic to the historian and the traveller, how much more recent and exotic is the capital of Russia. As Peter's mighty creation of the seat of his Empire is only just two hundred years old, it could not possibly offer us a single stone of the older world or the faintest memorial of the past. And of all the cities of the world St. Petersburg, I suppose, is the one most thoroughly the work of alien artists and is imitated from foreign art. Its grandiose scale and gorgeous palaces tell us of little but vicious taste and arrogant ostentation. Hardly a monument or a building, public or private, but recalls a foreign design, or some attempt to copy, to outbid, and often to vulgarise, a French or an Italian edifice. Now and then, the foreign artist has served his patron well, and has been suffered to erect a fine building; but too often the result is a pompous jumble of baroque ornamentation. Modern Tsars, like modern Sultans, seem to have thought that these sham Aladdin Palaces would fill their own subjects with admiration and awe, and strike the foreigner with envy and fear.

But the imperial ambition and boundless resources of the later Tsars have enriched Europe with two possessions of unique value—the Hermitage collections and the Isaac Church—both, except for raw material, wholly non-Muscovite. The statues and the paintings of the Hermitage are too well known to need another word, except that it is well worth a voyage of two thousand miles to see them. But in the unique col-

lection of Greek art in the Kertch gallery, a dominant thought comes into the mind. We are too apt to think of Greek art in terms of its temples and its statues; and even in the museums of London, Paris, Rome, or Athens we are mainly absorbed in pediments, marbles, vases, and terra-cottas. A careful study of the Hellenic remains found in Russian territory and now in the Hermitage, in gold, ivory, wood, bronze, and the most trifling implements of daily use, brings home to us the familiar details of Greek life, and impresses on us the truth that the architecture and the statuary of Greece were simply the mountain tops of an æsthetic genius which surrounded with its halo and aroma the life of every Hellene from the cradle to the grave, in his rising up and in his lying down, in the most trivial and most common act of existence. Greek temples and statues were great art, because every Greek, man, woman, or child, lived in minor art, by art, and for art. How touching in its simple grace—*simplex munditiis*—is the little engraved wooden comb, a birthday gift to a soldier on a campaign from his sister, inscribed "a sister's gift." With such a comb we may fancy the Spartans of Leonidas sate in the pass of Thermopylæ "combing their long hair," as Herodotus relates. Alas! it makes one tingle, in poring over these Crimean relics, to remember the savage destruction of the old Kertch museum in 1855, when the town was occupied by British troops, as described by Sir William Russell and by Dr. Duncan Macpherson.

To my mind an even greater glory of St. Petersburg than the Hermitage is to be found in the vast Isaac Church. Of all the domed edifices of the world, it is the only one that reaches perfection—at least in its elevation, external and sky aspect, and for its exterior. I have long ago contended that the dome

was the grandest discovery in architecture ever made by man, has been the most prolific of all elements of the building art, and lastly, that the dome must be the essence, centre, and soul of every great domed building, and not a mere adjunct or ornament. The oldest and the greatest of domed buildings—the Pantheon at Rome and Santa Sophia at Constantinople—fulfil this axiom; but neither of these has any adequate exterior, and both have been diverted to other uses by successive creeds. It is the exterior aspect of St. Isaac's with which I am now concerned.

The domes of Brunelleschi at Florence, of Michael Angelo at Rome, of Wren at St. Paul's, are tacked on to Latin Cruciform churches with long naves to the west, which utterly ruin the effect of the dome as seen from the front approach, and greatly lessen its majesty when seen from within. The same is to some degree the case with the Panthéon and the Invalides in Paris, and perhaps every domed church in Western Christendom. In spite of the protests of Michael Angelo and of Wren, the Latin churches deliberately destroyed the symmetry of their fanes by insisting on long western naves. The dome of the Capitol at Washington is merely an adjunct to the huge lateral colonnades. The Kaiser's new cathedral in Berlin is happily avoiding the fatal blunder of crowding out a central dome by a long Latin cross; but the Greek Church naturally placed its dome on a Greek or equilateral cross.

This is the only way in which a dome can be seen to advantage, and to my mind the exterior of the Isaac Church, as seen from the garden on the north, or from the Neva, is far the most successful of all the domed buildings in Europe—indeed, it is the most symmetrical of all recent buildings. The stupendous portals of granite monoliths on the four sides of the

square church make a magnificent base to the dome, which is admirably carried up by the four belfry towers and the minor domes around. All this is proportioned with a sense of symmetry and of reserve which are quite Greek in spirit and do high honour to their French designer. Grand, simple, and harmonious as is this consummate pile, it has nothing Russian about it except its superb granite and marble. I count these tremendous monoliths of polished pink granite from Finland—forty-eight of them, ordered with consummate judgment in two double colonnades of sixteen each on north and south, and two single colonnades of eight each on east and west—as being the principal triumphs of modern architecture. A monolith column is an emblem always of might, majesty, and solidity. In our islands we have never seen and cannot realise the sublimity of monolith columns more than fifty feet high and more than six feet in diameter. The mind reels when one tries to conceive the incalculable labour involved in the quarrying, hauling, and polishing of these colossal granite pillars. I love to stand beneath them by the hour, filled with the same sense of awe with which I have gazed up at the dome of the Pantheon or of Justinian's temple of Santa Sophia. They enable us to recall in imagination what that portal of Agrippa was at its best.

Inside and out, St. Petersburg abounds in lovely marbles and colossal stones. To my mind, the Kazan Cathedral is not equal to the Isaac, but it has even more monolith columns. This is the one great glory of Muscovy. Enormous natural resources and unlimited manual labour it has—and when these are placed in the hands of French or Italian artists of genius, a great and rare triumph is the result. When the Muscovite falls back on native art, it is barbarous, baroque, gaudy, and discordant, like the

blazonings of a negro potentate. On the Kazan Church they have hung bronze replicas of Ghiberti's exquisite gates in the Baptistery, and near them are coarse imitations of modern work. Everything Russian is mammoth, as if bigness could mean beauty, or costliness could spell art. It is astonishing that the people who possess so exquisite a type of all that is sublime in architecture, as is the Isaac Church, could endure the barbaric trumpery and gaudy colours of the new Expiatory Church of the Resurrection. But so it is. It recalls the antique traditions of the Kremlin, and that is enough in Holy Russia. There never was, and never will be, any pure art in the slough of such obstinate superstition and ignorant pride. The North may be, as the poet says, "Dark, and true, and tender," but for beauty, gaiety, and grace, let us wend our steps toward the South.

NOTE.—Since this was written, it has been publicly stated that the foundations of the Isaac Church are giving way. That does not destroy the credit of the architectural design.

It has also been asserted that the columns are not true monoliths. This I refuse to believe, unless it refers to small local restoration of injuries.

CHAPTER XXII

FIRTH'S 'CROMWELL'*

1900

THIS is an excellent book, a fascinating book, a decisive book. It tells the life-history of our mighty Puritan hero with all the fulness and accuracy which so many years of original research have made the privilege of the writer. It tells the story with a lucid vigour which must hold the interest of every reader, and it will pass with historians as the final estimate of the character and achievements of the Protector. It is a book to study, a book to enjoy, a book to live.

The outside public, which had heard of Mr. Firth mainly through his lives of Cromwell and the other Civil War leaders and notables in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, his Clarke papers and other original documents edited by him for the Camden Society and the Royal Historical Society, might have supposed that a new life of Oliver, based on his *Dictionary* article and his other studies of documents, would bear more traces of the learned archivist than of the popular historian. The book before us

* *Oliver Cromwell and the Rule of the Puritans in England*, by Charles Firth, M.A., Balliol College, Oxford; in "Heroes of the Nations," edited by Evelyn Abbott, M.A. (G. P. Putnam's Sons.)

justifies the belief of all the friends and colleagues of Mr. Firth, that he was quite able to combine vivid narrative and living portraiture with inexhaustible research and thorough scholarship. The result is a monograph in five hundred pages which must satisfy the expectations of the student no less than the curiosity of the public.

The distinctive point about the book is this: Mr. Firth for the first time combines a full and detailed narrative of Cromwell's entire career with exhaustive research into all the original sources. One or two very learned students of the documents have edited these, and have supplied us with admirable elucidations and sketches of the man and his times. There are also perhaps a score of lives of Cromwell, of greater or less merit, bulk, and research, which are not the result of a long first-hand study of all the available material, whether manuscript or printed. Carlyle laboured on the original papers and memoirs, and gave us an invaluable commentary, but not a real biography. Mr. S. R. Gardiner's monumental history, with all the mountains of research that he has condensed into five volumes, has not yet reached the close of the Protectorate; and his two short studies of Oliver, however valuable as estimates, are neither of them a complete biography. Mr. J. L. Sandford, Mr. F. A. Inderwick, Q.C., and others have published special studies and useful documents, but they have not written anything like continuous narratives. On the other hand, the many writers in England and in America who have published substantive biographies of more or less industry and skill—some suggestive, some eloquent, some dull, and many of them worthless—have not professed to base their histories on such exhaustive study of manuscript and contemporary authorities as Carlyle and Gardiner have done. Mr. Firth, with a

first-hand knowledge of the whole extant material certainly not less than that of either Carlyle or Gardiner, has for the first time written an ample history of the man and his comrades, every line of which bears the stamp of original research.

The question as to which the reader will first desire to be satisfied is certainly this: What is Mr. Firth's general estimate of the character and achievement of the Protector on the whole? He has left us in no sort of doubt.

Mr. Firth's Oliver is by no means the divinely inspired hero who can do no wrong, and whose commands mere men are bound to obey without reasoning or delay, as he appears to Carlyle and to some Puritan zealots in England and America. Mr. Firth shows us the defects of the Protector's great qualities, his inevitable limitations, his slow enlargement of purpose, and his anxious hesitations and changes of mind. On the other hand, he proves Oliver to have been a consummate soldier, a profoundly conscientious spirit, and a born statesman above all statesmen of his age, if not in our English history. Mr. Firth does not, like Carlyle, exult in Cromwell's part in regicide, in the Irish massacres, in his Scottish conquest, in his trampling on constitutional law and personal liberties. He faces all these problems squarely, not with Machiavellian scorn, but with historical insight into the temper and moral standards of the time; and he shows us how to weigh the great Puritan in the light of his surroundings and his ideals. On the other hand, he does not, like Mr. Gardiner and Mr. Morley, overemphasise Cromwell's indecisions, illegalities, failures, and arbitrary violence.

In a well-reasoned epilogue Mr. Firth sums up his general estimate of Cromwell. Though not myself accepting it without sundry qualifications

and "surrebutters," as lawyers say, I will endeavour to give the sense of this interesting chapter.

> Either as a soldier or as a statesman Cromwell was far greater than any Englishman of his time; and he was both soldier and statesman in one. We must look to Cæsar or Napoleon to find a parallel for this union of high political and military ability in one man. Cromwell was not as great a man as Cæsar or Napoleon, and he played his part on a smaller stage; but he "bestrode the narrow world" of Puritan England "like a Colossus." As a soldier he not only won great victories, but created the instrument with which he won them. Out of the military chaos which existed when the war began he organised the force which made Puritanism victorious. (P. 467.)

Cromwell inspired his men not only with confidence in himself, but with his own high enthusiasm. He created an army, said Clarendon, "whose order and discipline, whose sobriety and manners, whose courage and success made it famous and terrible over the world." "What remains clear," says Mr. Firth (p. 473), "is that Cromwell could adapt his strategy with unfailing success to the conditions of the theatre in which he waged war and to the character of the antagonists he had to meet. His military genius was equal to every duty which fate imposed upon him."

Turning to the problem of his character, Mr. Firth shows us how uniformly down to 1845 Cromwell was spoken of as a hypocrite and a self-seeker. Carlyle, says Mr. Firth, "effectually dispelled the theory of Cromwell's hypocrisy. 'Not a man of falsehoods, but a man of truths,' was Carlyle's conclusion, and subsequent historians and biographers have accepted it as sound." Though Cromwell was not a "fanatic" in Hume's sense, "religious rather

than political principles guided his action, and his political ideals were the direct outcome of his creed" (p. 476).

Cromwell's conception of his duty to his Maker and to his people was to do God's will—"to do that which is the will of God." The puzzle was to find out what, in things political, this will was, what it enjoined men to do. Some of Cromwell's comrades professed to have this revealed to them by their own personal convictions. "Cromwell never did so. 'I cannot say,' he declared in a prayer-meeting where such revelations had been alleged, 'that I have received anything that I can speak as in the name of the Lord'" (p. 477). Cromwell believed in "dispensations" rather than "revelations." He sought to extract the purpose of God from the visible trend of events; that is to say, he was a religious opportunist. His habit of waiting upon Providence till the providential design was clear was in effect a statesmanlike survey of all the conditions and surroundings. There never was so systematic an opportunist. This made him often so very slow to make up his mind and so willing to change it, even if he had to make a complete *volte-face*. Along with this went his fiery passion to execute his purpose when once he had finally resolved on action. This is the key to Cromwell's nature and career, his inconsistencies, his cautiousness, and his occasional furies.

This ingrained temper of watching the development of events explains the apparent want of sincere principle with which he was so unjustly charged, and explains also the mistakes into which his zeal in action sometimes led him. He never pretended to look very far ahead. "These issues and events, he said in 1656, have not been forecast, but were

sudden providences in things" (p. 479). Cromwell himself owned that he sometimes made too much of "outward dispensations"—*i.e.* of the finger of God in passing events. He sometimes mistook the ulterior meaning of facts, but he did not misunderstand the present importance of facts. He judged facts as they were. "If the fact be so, he said, why should we sport with it?" It was this made Cromwell more practical and less visionary than other statesmen —more open-minded and better able to adapt his policy to changing circumstances and needs. He had no programme, no formulas, no doctrines. Forms of government were not good or bad *per se*; all depended on the conditions of the time, the temper of parties, and the ultimate success of the cause. He varied his means, but his ends remained the same. His end always was, to strengthen the religious spirit of the English nation. That was the CAUSE.

Hence to Cromwell "religious freedom was more important than political freedom" (p. 483). He always held that spiritual interests must take the lead over civil liberty. And he clung to this, notwithstanding that the majority of the English people did not believe this view, and he knew that he was leader of only a godly minority for the time being. He was no democrat—but neither was he a tyrant.

Cromwell wished to govern constitutionally. No theory of the divine right of an able man to govern the incapable multitude blinded his eyes to the fact that self-government was the inheritance and right of the English people. He accepted the first principle of democracy, the doctrine of the sovereignty of the people, or, as he phrased it, "that the foundation of supremacy is in the people and to be by them set down in their representatives." More than once he declared that the good of the governed was the supreme end of all governments, and he claimed

that his own government acted "for the good of the people, and for their interest, and without respect had to any other interest." But government for the people did not necessarily mean government by the people. "That's the question," said Cromwell, "what's for their good, not what pleases them," and the history of the Protectorate was a commentary on this text. (Firth, p. 484.)

This, however, is not, as Mr. Firth seems to think, "the first principle of democracy." It is the cardinal idea of Whiggism, or rather of the whole scheme of our Parliamentary government, under Whigs, Tories, Conservatives, or Radicals, from the time of the Revolution of 1689 down to our generation. Our own generation, it seems, adopts the pure democratic ticket, as understood at Athens, Geneva, or Chicago —What do the electors wish? not What is good for the people? This latter principle was the principle of Cromwell, as it was of Walpole, Chatham, Pitt, Canning, and Peel. Like theirs, Cromwell's rule was to lead the nation, not to follow it. In so understanding his duty to God and the People, he was not a tyrant, but a Conservative English statesman.

Cromwell felt confident that his own good and strong government would in the end convince the people that it was their true interest to accept his temporary dictatorship in the trust of his gradually instituting constitutional government. The present writer still holds that this might have been possible if Cromwell could have lived twenty years more, and had introduced in time the inevitable modifications and rearrangements that circumstances and the nation required. Mr. Firth thinks the hope fallacious, for the enthusiasm of Puritanism was spent. But Cromwell, though entering on his career as a Puritan zealot, was also one of the most teachable, patient,

and conciliatory of statesmen. And being a consummately practical man, who, almost alone in history, is the one statesman who succeeded in all his enterprises, it is permissible to think that he might have founded a stable constitution had he been twenty years younger, and lived to develope from a Puritan chief into a national hero of the type of Alfred, or perhaps a dictator such as William the Silent.

This is not the view of Mr. Firth. But in estimating the final result of Cromwell's career, he amply vindicates it from the charge of ultimate nullity to which Mr. Gardiner and Mr. Morley seem too much inclined to lean. Mr. Firth does not make so much of the fact that Cromwell's institutions did not last. He points out that the failures were more apparent than real. This is his final estimate:

> So the Protector's institutions perished with him, and his work ended in apparent failure. Yet he had achieved great things. Thanks to his sword, absolute monarchy failed to take root in English soil. Thanks to his sword, Great Britain emerged from the chaos of the Civil Wars one strong state instead of three separate and hostile communities. Nor were the results of his action entirely negative. The ideas which inspired his policy exerted a lasting influence on the development of the English state. Thirty years after his death the religious liberty for which he fought was established by law. The union with Scotland and Ireland, which the statesmen of the Restoration undid, the statesmen of the eighteenth century effected. The mastery of the seas he had desired to gain, and the greater Britain he had sought to build up, became sober realities. Thus others perfected the work which he had designed and attempted. (P. 486.)

But this amounts to saying that Cromwell was the real founder of modern England in the two centuries and a half that have passed. It would be as true

to say that Charlemagne or William the Silent left nothing behind them as to say this of Oliver Cromwell.

Mr. Firth gives no support to the criticism that Cromwell was too often the creature of circumstances, not the founder of any policy, but the waiter on events. Few statesmen recorded in history, unless it were William the Silent or Queen Elizabeth, were more anxious watchers of the present facts, more ready to tack and turn at each change of breeze, than was the Protector. But, as Mr. Firth paints his career, that is no sign of mental indecision or slowness of apprehension. It is the mark of the practical genius, of indomitable vigilance, and alertness of mind. Nor is the failure of Cromwell's institutions any proof that he was without constructive and original power. He never designed his stop-gap institutions to be permanent. No permanent institutions could have been founded in 1653. The Protector spoke of himself as the constable set there to keep order—to prevent the return to anarchy or the restoration of the Stuarts. The permanence of Cromwell's work consisted in the revival and ultimate establishment of the great ideas for which he fought with sword and with voice. These ideas—liberty of conscience, suppression of absolute monarchy and feudal aristocracy, union of the three kingdoms, mastery of the seas—were all made the real and permanent bases of English policy within a few generations. Cromwell, it is true, did not conceive any of these ideas out of his own brain as things new and original. But he saw how to make them prevail as solid facts in the political sphere. The originality of the man of action consists in making the winning ideas dominant realities in the practical world.

Mr. Firth's account of Cromwell's early life down

to the Civil War is a clear summary of the few certain facts, to which he does not seem to have added any new item. He makes no allusion to the story about the brewery. His picture of the arbitrary rule of Charles in the time of Strafford and Laud is a telling indictment of disordered and vacillating tyranny. "Absolutism," he says, "was with Strafford a political creed, with Laud an ecclesiastical necessity. Each needed the same tool; one to realise his dream of a well-governed Commonwealth, the other to shape a Church that had grown half Calvinistic into conformity with the Anglican ideal" (p. 27). As to Charles, whom Mr. Firth judges severely, "his policy was a series of intrigues which failed, and a succession of bargains in which he asked much, offered little, and got nothing. As it was purely dynastic in its aim, and at once unprincipled and unsuccessful, it left him with no ally in Europe" (p. 24).

It is when Mr. Firth reaches the Civil Wars that we find his immense knowledge of the contemporary literature, printed and manuscript, come fully into action. Mr. Firth's campaigns and battles are, perhaps, the most effective parts of his book. He has thoroughly exhausted the materials, added some new points, unknown even to Mr. Gardiner, and has given plans of the principal battles and campaigns, differing, as he tells us in the preface, from the received accounts in some respects. It is an annoying slip that, in the plan of Naseby (p. 128), the engraver has reversed the positions of the Parliamentary and Royalist forces, which are stated accurately in the text. By the way, should not the cut on p. 101 be described as the Cromwell coat-of-arms and crest, and not simply as the "Cromwell crest," seeing that a shield with seven quarterings is displayed? And, as the "Cromwell coat-of-arms" on p. 325 entirely differs both in

tinctures and charges from the Cromwell coat on p. 101, some explanation of the various quarterings should be given. The Cromwell coat proper (*sable, a lion rampant, argent*) is the same on both shields, but the remaining six are all different from the corresponding quarters.

Mr. Firth traces, with great care and abundant learning, the process by which Cromwell, civilian, farmer, and Puritan as he was, made himself a consummate soldier. It is thought that, before war broke out, he was saturated with accounts of the campaigns of Gustavus Adolphus, then very popular in England, and was imbued with clear ideas of the tactics and military principles of that great commander. Cromwell, who never saw a squadron till he was forty-three, learned how to fight by constant fighting, and having a natural genius for command, and an intense interest in the art of war, he ripened fast by practice and what Marvell calls his "industrious valour," into the most consummate tactician who ever fought on British soil. Mr. Firth's account of the battles of Marston Moor and of Dunbar differs in some particulars from the received views, for reasons which he has himself explained in the "Royal Historical Society's Transactions." His new explanation of the battle of Dunbar is particularly interesting and lucid.

Mr. Firth's account of the King's trial and execution will be read with keen appreciation, though he does not seem to have added any new point, nor to differ from the judgment of our best historians. He accepts it as the work of the army and its partisans alone, by them regarded as a just expiation of crime with which God must be pleased. Blood, they said, defiled the land, which could not be cleansed save by the blood of him that shed it. Cromwell, according to Mr. Firth, entirely adopted this view.

He had been one of the last men of his party to believe the King's death a necessity, but having persuaded himself that it was a just and necessary act, he saw no reason for remorse. It seemed to him that England had freed itself from a tyrant "in a way which Christians in after times will mention with honour, and all tyrants in the world look at with fear." (P. 231.)

The famous scene of the dissolution of the Long Parliament is told with equal brilliancy and detail. Here, again, Cromwell acted as the instrument of the army and its party, without a shadow of legal right. As between the faction at St. Stephen's and the army, legalities were equally shadowy; but, in Mr. Firth's opinion, the constitutional shadow in the remnant of a Parliament was destined in the long run to baffle the Protectorate. As to the Protectorate, Mr. Firth abundantly justifies its claim as the most efficient, most liberal, most tolerant government that England had known, hampered by its initial want of any legitimate authority, and by the incurable irreconcilability of the Parliamentary notables, but able, honest, patient, and full of good purposes and rational reforms.

Mr. Firth's review of Cromwell's foreign policy, in Chapter xviii., should be studied with special care, having regard to recent discussions and criticisms. He sums it up thus:—

Three aims guided Cromwell's foreign policy: the first was the desire to maintain and spread the Protestant religion; the second, the desire to preserve and extend English commerce; the third, the desire to prevent the restoration of the Stuarts by foreign aid. The European mission of England, its material greatness, and its political independence were inseparably associated in his mind, and beneath all apparent wavering and hesitation, these three aims he consistently pursued.

In spite of the tangle of foreign complications left by Stuarts and the Long Parliament, Oliver achieved each of these ends in triumph. He made advantageous peace with the Dutch, with Sweden, with Denmark, with Portugal. These treaties not only broke up any prospect of foreign coalition, but effectually secured British commerce, which now advanced "by leaps and bounds." Thereupon the two great powers of the continent, France and Spain, were bidding against each other for a British alliance. Long did Oliver hesitate which to accept. Both were Catholic, both our rivals, both presented possible dangers. The vacillation which has been imputed to the Protector was really statesmanlike foresight. His changes of policy were due to extraordinary difficulties in the situation. At last, under the hostile attitude of Spain, Cromwell allied himself with France, and gained Dunkirk. Mr. Firth is not prepared to condemn his policy of preferring a French to a Spanish alliance. It was impossible at that time to foresee the coming decadence of Spain, the overweening ambition of Louis XIV., and the folly and servility of the Stuarts of the Restoration.

Of the success of Cromwell's colonial policy Mr. Firth has an even higher estimate.

> Cromwell was the first English ruler who systematically employed the power of the government to increase and extend the colonial possessions of England. His colonial policy was not a subordinate part of his foreign policy, but an independent scheme of action, based on definite principles and persistently pursued.

All the English colonies grew up during the life-time of Cromwell, and during the Protectorate these were extended and consolidated into what might be called the nucleus of the Empire. Mr. Firth thinks Cromwell had at one time the idea of emigrating, and

all through his life he had the keenest interest in New England. Ever since 1643 he was officially connected with the government of the colonies. These American colonies exercised great influence on the development of democracy and independency in England. "The imperial purpose which had inspired the colonial policy of the Commonwealth found its fullest expression in the actions of the Protector" (p. 393). In the internal affairs of the colonies, Cromwell interfered very little. But he waged war zealously to extend the British colonies on the American continent, whether against French, Dutch, or Spaniards. In spite of the failure of Penn and Venables in Hispaniola, the capture of Jamaica laid the foundation of British West Indies.

> In reality it was the most fruitful part of his external policy, and produced the most abiding results. . . . Thus the colonial policy which Cromwell and the statesmen of the Republic had initiated became the permanent policy of succeeding rulers, and it became so because it represented not the views of a particular party, but the aspirations and the interests of Englishmen in general. (P. 404.)

It must be taken as a plain truth of history that Cromwell is the first consistent and systematic architect of British Imperialism. As such he has been, and he will be, praised or blamed by those who glory in or those who condemn the huge structure which has been built up on those foundations. But those who deplore that such barbarous excrescences on the glorious roll of English history should be linked with the memory of so pure a name, do not forget that the Protector of the middle of the seventeenth century must not be judged by the canons of any school in the end of the nineteenth century; that the standard we use must be relative, not absolute; that Cromwell, however wise and just, could

not rise above the best ideals of his age, beyond the only religion conceivable to a Bible Christian.

In parting with the book of Mr. Firth we feel that at last we have a full and conclusive estimate of our great Puritan statesman, which, whilst it is based on a learning and research greater than any other biography of Cromwell in our language, is certainly second to none other in lucidity, literary art, and sound judgment.

CHAPTER XXIII

TWO CORONATIONS

1838, 1911

22nd June 1911

To those who remember the Coronation of Victoria and have witnessed also that of her grandson the contrasts of near three-quarters of a century seem big with inexhaustible meanings. Seventy-three years ago I was placed in Parliament Square to see the young Queen pass to the Abbey—with Wellington and his soldiers in the long war, and Melbourne and Russell, and the public men of the thirties. And to-day from Whitehall I saw King George and the new men in the second decade of the twentieth century. I ask myself—can the history of England in any period of three generations show changes so enormous and growth so portentous? And yet withal in much it seems my boyish impressions all repeated—the same, nay greater, popularity of the Monarchy, the same, nay greater, enthusiasm for Army and Navy, the same love of historic traditions, the same resolve to make politics a fair and square Constitutional fight.

Wealth, population, Empire, Army, Navy, in-

ventions, mechanical appliances, resources, habits—all have been trebled and enlarged beyond the bounds of a fairy tale. And yet I have seen to-day, in 1911, just what I saw in 1838—amplified in volume, but in substance the same.

In the year 1831 (when I was born)—the year of the Coronation of William IV.—the population of London, including the suburbs, was less than one million and a half. That of the next five cities in the kingdom did not make up half a million. There were no railways out of London at the Coronation of Victoria; and our family drove up easily in the morning the ten miles or so from the beautiful quiet village on the northern hills where I lived as a child and boy. There were crowds in the streets, and bunting, and troops and police, and illuminations, and the same anxiety to be in the Abbey, where the ceremony was almost the same as it was to-day. Few persons seem to understand that the essential parts of that ceremony are as old as Justinian and Constantine Porphyrogenitus. To me the wonder is that such vast material expansion and such incalculable novelties in life have made so small an alteration in the essentials of our national life, and even in the ideals of English patriotism.

There were new sights, fresh thoughts, in to-day's show no doubt. In 1838 the idea of bringing Indian troopers, Cavalry from Canada, Australia, New Zealand, would have seemed absurd. To bring soldiers from the Punjab or from Australasia would have cost a million and required a year for the double journey. The spectacle of 1911 is the visible representation of the Overseas Dominions and the fact of their hearty welcome by the public. Whenever an Asiatic or a Colonial trooper passed, the cheers were spontaneous and warm. Those who have magnificent

hopes of the Empire, as well as those whose dreams are of nightmares, equally admit that to the man in the street the unity of the King's Dominions is a real and a potent interest. Putting my impressions side by side, I was struck to-day by proof that the Monarchy is personally more popular than it was at the Accession of Victoria, and I think the bitterness of class antagonism is far less evident than it was in the hot days of the thirties. The candid observer everywhere recognised that the medieval pageantry, the persons and families of the Sovereigns, and even the equipages and the *valetaille* of the heraldic Peers, were well received and met with nothing but cheers. I speak simply of the crowd in the street. I was entirely outside all official or society interests. I went solely to see the people, and I came away with a belief that the people enjoyed the sight.

The people indeed to-day have been admirable. There is no doubt there has been in the last generation a great and general elevation of tone. The crowd behaved with a good temper, a cheerful tone, a discipline and patience which could not be surpassed by gentle Florentines or stolid Hollanders. Much of this blessed change must be put down to our school training and the immense improvement in the masses of Labour. There is no European capital which could show such a spectacle of popular freedom combined with orderly conduct. This is a point which is striking to those who know European masses. Our English people are getting to enjoy their holiday pleasures more gaily and more brightly than in the Georgian era. We cannot match the French or Italians or Austrians in art, in colour, in *abandon*, and *verve*; but the visible difference between the streets in 1911 and in 1838 is this—our people and their teachers have been abroad, have learned the graces of life and the charm of art, and call

for humane and artistic forms of public enjoyment. There is far too much of Early Victorian horrors and drab conventions still, but London is looking less like a big bazaar, and St. James's Street and Whitehall were certainly on the right road. It is melancholy to think of the tawdry rubbish they call "decorations" and the stupid gas stars and garters they call "illuminations." The least village on an Italian coast or lake can do better. But I confess that 1838 things were worse—far worse.

Next to the sight of the new gaiety, culture, and comfort of the people, the fact of this day was the triumphant organisation of the enormous spectacle and masses, by military and civil authorities alike. No accident, or even hitch, met my eyes or has reached my ears as I write to-night. The world has never seen so many millions crowded together in a city so vast, and for eighteen hours continually marshalled, patrolled, fed, and amused, to witness one of the most elaborate military and Royal pageants that ancient or modern history could parallel. Nothing of the kind, since Trajan and Aurelian, could have been possible. It reached over the whole globe, which for twenty-four hours seemed to concentrate in a single city specimens of its races, costumes, and arms. Few can conceive the tremendous responsibilities of such a gathering. And the least observant and the most envious must admit that it was a feat of civil and military organisation of the very first order. The boundless extension of the British Empire and the incredible scale of London and its population would be mere chaos without adequate power to organise both. And George V. and his chiefs have shown the world that England still has powers of command.

No man who has been for twelve hours in the midst of this popular panorama can attempt in an hour

to trace all the impressions it has forced on his mind. Amongst the obvious points of interest that I noticed specially was the hearty and spontaneous welcome given to the German Crown Prince, who was recognised and cheered even when he made an unofficial and surprise inspection in his motor. And it seemed to me next that the French and the American Envoys were the most popular, and to some extent the Prince from Japan. I shall lie down in bed to-night with better hopes of the immediate future of our country, and, indeed, of the continued peace of the civilised world.

CHAPTER XXIV

WESTMINSTER ABBEY

JUNE 1911

At the Jubilee of Queen Victoria several of us interested in history or in art made indignant protest against the risk to the Abbey and the disfigurement of its venerable aisles with the barbarous booths by which its structure was menaced and its beauty was defiled. I wish to put on record our disgust at the vulgar abomination which was renewed at the recent Coronation.

I am not making any criticism either of Monarchy or Coronation as a national and historic ceremonial. Sensible men of all parties regard the Crown not only as a useful, but at the present day as an indispensable institution. As to Coronation, with its historic meaning as a national declaration of mutual trust by ruler and ruled, it goes along with the Crown. And in the normal state of Sociocracy, the public investiture of the Head of the State would be treated as a Sacrament. If prelates and officials find they can perform on the "theatre" of our Abbey the Byzantine ritual of the Porphyrogeniti without laughing in each other's faces, as did the Roman Augurs, I do not at all wish to smile at a scene which would do honour to Sir Herbert Tree.

So, for my part, I am quite in favour of a solemn and even religious investiture of the Crown.

What I complain of is something quite different. It is, first, that the most sacred Church in all Christendom was for six months converted into a builder's workshop, and night and day remained in hourly danger of utter destruction, whilst minor injuries to the fabric and tombs were done by carpenters and scene-shifters. Secondly, I complain that for six months the grandest monument in Europe was turned into a St. Martin's Lane Coliseum, or a mere Olympia Horse Show, where the first thing considered was "the seating accommodation" for so many thousands. These two things, the risk of fire and the disfigurement of the church, were quite separable from the Coronation. There was no real need to seat noble Backwoodsmen and the busybodies and touts of society. There was no need to build a huge green-room, a restaurant, and dressing-rooms for Royalty, as if the crowning were another Shakespeare costume ball. If the tedious ceremonial could not be abridged, and all this "quick-change costumery" was a necessity of kingship, there was no need of tawdry booths stuck on to the Abbey which were only fit for the Crystal Palace or Earl's Court. The Abbey communicates with the Deanery, Cloisters, and an immense range of buildings in which there was ample room for robing, rest, refreshment, and every other incidental purpose. It was wanton vulgarity to plaster the Abbey with side-shows which suggested "Old Westminster"; entrance, 1s., and 6d.

As to the huge scaffolding under which the exquisite arcades and transepts were submerged, they were even more needless and wanton. The ordinary seats in the Abbey would hold quite as many persons as should be there, and the pathetic old remnant of Feudal

Catholicism would have looked far more noble if it had been left in its ordinary form. Who could better that? Why need every pushing speculator who has paid for his honour be seated in the grand circle or stalls whilst M.P.s were skied behind distant columns? It was no doubt well to have various estates, orders, interests, and societies represented at the ceremony. These might have been selected in equal numbers—say ten from each by ballot, as was done at the clubs. A thousand persons were quite enough to represent the forty millions, most of whom would have been glad to be present. If the crowning had taken place in the Abbey as it appeared last Christmas Day, in the presence of about a thousand persons selected by ballot out of about a hundred different orders, it might have been a fine and typical representation of the kingdom. The desperate effort to cram in society notables reduced the whole thing to a farcical pageant, reeking with snobbery and bad taste.

As to the so-called decorations—which many of us call the desecrations (I mean the upholstery, curtains, and blazonry)—no doubt they were not so bad as usual, and some people evidently found them entrancing. A few really antique tapestries, or carpets, or banners may not have been out of place; but to go beyond this, to conceal the lovely traceries, to box off the monuments, to trample upon the tombs, and to treat the Abbey as if it were Covent Garden or Drury Lane Theatre—this was to desecrate the House of God and the sleeping place of so many heroes. No good colour scheme could atone for this vandalism. His Grace the Earl Marshal and his prelates would not have suffered it to be done to their new cathedral at Westminister. It was the very irony of politics that it was superintended by our own good friend the Lord President of the Council, who was actually

engaged in the task of ending or mending the House of Lords.

Let us be thankful that he did not end the Abbey, and I am sure he cannot mend it. But until the last plank of the booths and sheds is carted away, I shall not be easy that the risk of fire is over. I remember how at the Jubilee a late Dean told me with tears in his eyes that if the Abbey did catch fire he prayed that he might be burned with it. But when fire risk is over there will remain the memory of much sordid pandering to vulgar tastes. And whenever in the distant future another Coronation may be held, let us trust that the public may be spared the inane transformation of the Abbey into a theatre or a music-hall.

I suggest that if the historic ceremony of Consecration by Anglican Prelates has to be made in the Abbey, there should be on the next or following day, an installation of a far more truly lay, popular, and representative sort in St. Paul's, which would easily hold 10,000 persons without any disfigurement and where by a ceremonial perambulation his Majesty might pass into the immediate presence of delegates chosen from every interest in the Nation and in the Empire. To cram real representatives into the Abbey along with nameless busybodies and parasites, is to debase and endanger our ancient fame.

CHAPTER XXV

THE LONDON LIBRARY SUBJECT INDEX

1909

THE Subject Index of the London Library, upon which the Librarian, Dr. Hagberg Wright, and a special staff have been engaged for nearly five years, is now published. Considering the vast mass of literature that it covers, its completeness of reference, and the services it will offer to readers of all classes, it will be judged as a work having no rival with which it could be compared, at any rate in England. It is a catalogue of some 250,000 volumes carefully selected by experts from the literature of all ages and countries, which has been classified in alphabetical order of their subjects, under an elaborate system of subsidiary groups.

The scale of the work immensely surpasses that of any similar index, except that of the British Museum, and those of one or two national libraries, which fill many volumes. This Index is in one manageable quarto of 1254 pages in triple column, and it contains no less than 18,000 different headings, with the titles, dates, and authors' names of some 166,000 works. For the purpose of the Index fiction was not included. It is obvious that any detailed classi-

fication of works of fiction, unless so far as language or epoch may go, would be hardly practicable and was certainly not requisite.

As the London Library is not at all a miscellaneous collection, but has been selected by literary experts over a period of the last seventy years, this Index will serve readers of all kinds as a handy bibliography, or guide to useful books. But, as it is a catalogue of the books actually on the shelves of one institution, and yet not at all confined to a particular building, but circulating amongst the members, it is a classified list of the books which can be used by the reader in his own home.

The practical difference between a bibliography and a library catalogue is obvious. A mere bibliography is a select list of books of value on different subjects; and it may range in scale from Lord Avebury's *Best Hundred Books* to the elaborate guides to books of W. S. Sonnenschein or some American compilations. But, however good and complete such a list may be, the books it mentions are, of course, not available in any actual collection or library; and the works needed will have to be found by the reader in some public library or acquired for his own.

On the other hand, a library catalogue, whether of Authors or of Subjects, is the list of books contained in a particular building and accessible within its rooms, or it may be, to be taken away from it. The books catalogued in such a list can be seen, or can be sent for, and taken away by any reader entitled to use the volumes.

The Subject Index of the London Library has both characters. It is a real working bibliography, inasmuch as it is a collection of books, specially selected by experts, and arranged in careful classification

by subject, age, and country. As such, it may be used by any reader in any part of the world, whatever be the library to which he may have immediate access. This new index, from its size and completeness, must soon become a manual of reference to all students at home and abroad, without regard to their being members of the London or any other lending library.

On the other hand, the new Index will serve to indicate to every member of the London Library the specially selected books on any subject which he wishes to study; and he can see the book wanted on the shelves in St. James's Square, or may write to the Librarian to forward it to him.

There are several elements which may constitute the usefulness of any subject index—or may lessen it. A vast miscellaneous library, from its very bulk, makes any complete subject index of its contents practically impossible—and if it were made, it would be unworkable except by special students under limited conditions. To make a complete subject index of every volume in the British Museum or in one of the great University Libraries would be a task of enormous labour and cost; and, if made, it would be an encyclopædia or a library in itself, in a great number of bulky volumes, ten or twenty times that of this single volume. The British Museum, which is worked with conspicuous industry and skill, publishes a Subject Index of the modern works added to it, in sectional periods of ten and of five years. At present we have indexes of the modern works added to the British Museum in the years 1881-1905 in four volumes of about 1000 pages each. That is to say, the index of four years requires more than 1000 pages. The Index of the London Library, for books issued during four centuries, goes in one manageable volume of 1254 pages.

A subject index of a vast miscellaneous library, even if made, would be useless as a bibliography, or guide to books. *Mole ruit sua.* The really useful books would be swamped in rubbish, for a State Library, or one established by Statute, cannot select, and its shelves have to take books as they are issued. Our Museum Library, which is so admirably organised, does its best to deal with this flood of matter, and it offers its ordinary readers in one great hall an invaluable selection of current books of reference, carefully arranged in convenient groups and tabulated in special catalogues. But then this most serviceable collection amounts only to a few thousand works. The London Library Index tabulates some 250,000 volumes. And these have been carefully chosen by men of letters from Thomas Carlyle down to Sir Leslie Stephen.

Thus, a subject index of a library of 2,000,000 books would be useless from its unmanageable dimensions to any but learned students. One of no more than 5000 books would be too limited to be of use to them. The ideal scale for a working index would be a range not exceeding 250,000 volumes, and these the result of systematic expert selection. Indexes, like dictionaries, which run into many volumes are often troublesome, as those who have to pass up and down the Museum catalogues well know. A subject index in four volumes, which only covers the publications of fifteen years ending 1905, has manifold uses, but it is not what the general reader often wants. The very book he needs might have been published in 1880 or in 1906, and would not be in the index. Now, the new London Library Index in one volume deals with literature of all ages and countries ; it ranges from facsimiles of the Gospels or of Shakespeare's poems to publications of the present year.

There are many excellent subject indexes of special

sciences and of particular collections. Count Bünau published at Leipzig in 1750-56 a classified catalogue of his own library of 42,000 volumes. Dr. Watt published a bibliography of some 40,000 works (Edinburgh, 1824); but as the authors' names are not given in the subject index, and the books are not in any particular library, the value of these catalogues, after eighty-five years have passed, is simply historical. The London Institution, various public departments, and some American libraries have issued subject catalogues of much usefulness. But all of these are of special periods, of special subjects, or of a limited number of books, so that they belong to a wholly different order from the Index under consideration.

What the ordinary student or the general reader wants to know is this—What are the titles, authors' names, and dates of works of authority of any age or language in the particular subject of study he has on hand? No special catalogue, no special period, no single language or nation would serve his turn. Bibliographies may tell him of a book he may buy or seek, but they do not help him to know where the book is. Subject catalogues without authors' names are usually misleading; if they state authors' names but omit the titles they mislead again: if they omit the date they may give endless trouble. Almost all subject catalogues fail in one or other point. The new Index invariably gives title, name, and date of no less than 250,000 volumes, under no less than 18,000 subject headings.

One must not overlook the very valuable publications of W. S. Sonnenschein, which have helped so many readers. His excellent bibliography of standard books has been brought down to the year 1901. It deals with about 50,000 works, chiefly English. It is, of course, "a guide to books," not the catalogue of

any existing library. They are not to be found in any particular place or institution, and, of course, they cannot be used by the reader at home. Again, the list does not cover the immense range of the literature of foreign nations, all those of Europe, and some Oriental. Whatever test we take, it will be found that the new Index combines every quality of usefulness that is needed in a classified catalogue of trustworthy authorities on every possible subject and of every age and kind of literature.

The indispensable conditions of usefulness to the average reader are a single handy volume, being a guide to general literature, with precise description of the books to be found in a very large selected library.

Down to the present time the London Library had no classified index but that of 1888, issued by Mr. Robert Harrison. It was in about 100 pages, and had about 5000 sub-headings. The new Index has 1254 pages and more than 18,000 headings of subjects. The index of 1888 gave neither title nor date of any work, but only the first word of each entry in the authors' catalogue. For instance, under "Natural History" it gives these names :—"Adams, Aelian, Aldrovandus, Allman, Anderson, Animal World, Annales, Aristotle, Astruc, Atkinson, Bacon, Baird, Bates," and 102 other names, ending with "Yarrell." It is obvious that a bare list of 115 names, in which Aristotle, Bacon, and Darwin figure with Goldsmith and "Monkeys" would not be of much use to the student or to the general reader.

In the new Index Natural History occupies nine columns of print, with some 30 sub-headings, distinguishing the various branches, epochs, and countries of this science. In each case the title, scope, author, and date are given. These particulars are obviously

essential to anything that pretends to be a guide to the 300 works grouped under "Natural History."

In the classified subject catalogue of a great library it is obvious that its usefulness depends on the completeness and scientific arrangement of its subdivisions. To lump together a thousand works under a general heading would, of course, be no classification at all. Turn in the new Index to the title "Law." It occupies some 36 columns, which give nearly 1500 references to various works. These are classified under no less than 150 sub-headings, carrying the subject into special details, such as Chaldean, Kaffir, Maltese, Welsh, Law. And besides this, the student will find under "Law" some thousands of cross-references.

We turn, for example, to the heading "Libraries." We have under this more than 50 sub-headings, with about 400 references. These are classified into countries of Europe, America, Asia, and Africa; Ancient, Modern, Private, Public, and so forth; Library Architecture, Management, Catalogues, Conferences, Legal, Cathedral, Subscription, Societies, Clubs, &c.; ending with Library Classification, and above 40 other cross-references. Suppose a reader desires to ascertain what is the law governing libraries in France. It is probably a matter about which a learned English lawyer might hardly know where to look. He turns to the new Index—heading "Libraries—France"; then in column 3, page 651, he finds at a glance the sub-heading "Law of Libraries," and he is at once referred to "Gautier (Jean), Nos bibliothèques, leur situation légale, &c., 8vo, 1903." A student turned into a vast public library, without an adequate index, might waste a morning before he alighted upon a useful book such as that of "Jean Gautier." In the old Index of 1888

he would find no classification under "Libraries," but only about thirty names of authors.

The secret of the usefulness of the new Index lies in the singularly minute detail into which the 18,000 headings allow the references to be carried. As specimens of this detail one may turn to the sub-headings—"Kiowa Indians," "Kissing, etiquette of," "Japanese Music—Libraries—Calendars," "Children's Games," "Street-cleaning," "Portiuncula," "Tuskegee Institute." The Index, in short, is an "Encyclopædic Bibliography." No attempt has been made to frame a hard-and-fast classification of books, according to an abstract scheme of topics, about which men of letters and philosophers might debate for years. The object has been to use as headings the working title under which a reader of average learning and intelligence would in practice begin his search.

The preface to the new Index gives a complete history of the undertaking. It was originally suggested by Sir Leslie Stephen when he was President of the London Library in 1893, in succession to Lord Tennyson. The new Authors' Catalogue had first to be made. This was not completed until 1903, when it was issued as a quarto volume in 1626 pages of double column. In that year a small sub-Committee was formed to consider the form and plan of a new subject index. Sir Leslie Stephen was chairman, and Mr. Sidney Lee, Mr. Edmund Gosse, Mr. Austin Dobson, Dr. W. Hunt, and Mr. H. R. Tedder, with the present writer, were members. Dr. Hagberg Wright, the secretary, was charged to organise a special staff and to direct the work, which was begun on May 1, 1905, and has been continued without interruption down to 1909.

Apart from the grouping of some 18,000 headings, the practical difficulties were great. The London

Library is not a stationary reference library, but has a constant circulation of some 15,000 or 16,000 volumes away in the hands of members. As the new Index was invariably compiled from actual inspection of the books catalogued and not from any existing catalogue, special devices were required to avoid the entering any book more than once and the possibility of any book being overlooked. These precautions and the entire system of classification were the work of Dr. Hagberg Wright personally. Several experts in bibliography confidently pronounce the system to have been a masterpiece of organisation.

The London Library, be it remembered, has been formed gradually since 1841 by a committee on which a long succession of well-known scholars in every department of literature and science have served. The collection has every claim to be regarded as one in which nothing of any importance has been overlooked. It has had the advantage of receiving regularly the publications of a great number of public societies and institutions at home and abroad. Though it has no specialist character, it has an adequate selection of scientific works. It is particularly strong in foreign literature of all kinds, both European and Oriental, including Russian, Scandinavian, Dutch, Arabic, Hindu, Chinese, and Japanese.

In preparing the Index the Librarian has had the assistance of a number of special scholars in many subjects, such as Professor J. B. Bury, Sir Frederick Pollock, Sir Courtenay Ilbert, the late Sir Robert Giffen, Mr. Ingram Bywater, Dr. A. W. Ward, and very many other eminent writers. In revising the index of special subjects attention was continually drawn to some *lacuna*, or book which had been overlooked and was not in the library. These omissions were filled up by purchase and catalogued in due course.

The printing of a book having some 200,000 references, nearly all of them in abbreviated form, with scrupulous uniformity, accuracy, and condensation was a *tour de force* in itself. It has been carried through by Messrs. Spottiswoode & Co. (Limited), employing a special staff of printers and readers, with astonishing rapidity and accuracy. It was accomplished in nine months beginning in February 1909, and was kept up without intermission at the rate of forty pages a week. The reading each week of forty pages of proof, each page containing 250 lines of print—the print often being such as this—(Guilhermy (*b. R de*) Inscr. de la Fr., 5—18.s., t. 1—5, 1873-83)—was in itself a severe strain on compositors, readers, as well as on the Librarian. He had the assistance in reading the proofs of several members of the committee, including Mr. H. R. Tedder, the distinguished librarian of the Athenæum Club.

The members of the London Library and those who purchase its Index have now offered to them a work which has had the assistance of a great body of men of learning, and which will make a mark in the history of English bibliography.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE POSITIVIST LIBRARY

(*First published*, 1886; *revised*, 1912)

Preface

In October 1851 Auguste Comte published a list of books for general reading, which he called *The Positivist Library in the Nineteenth Century*. It consists of about 270 distinct compositions, by about 140 authors. His purpose was, "to guide the more thoughtful minds among the people in their choice of books for constant use." He thought that intellect and moral character suffer grievously from ill-directed reading; and his aim was to present, within limits accessible to all educated men, a collection of works of permanent value for habitual use. In this, as throughout the whole of his teaching, may be seen his leading idea, that all intellectual training should have a synthetic character, and should serve to cultivate the whole nature. It was designed as one of the instruments by which education might be ultimately reorganised.

The conditions of such a sketch should always be borne in mind. It was avowedly provisional; it was meant for the nineteenth century; and it was liable to revision. Moreover, it is now sixty years old, and

the time for which it was designed has passed. It was not directly intended for any one European nation; and it has no literary, no special character. Lastly, the author warns us that it is not meant to exclude, but rather to suggest. It is no part of his object to stereotype literature, or to interfere with the development of any special knowledge.

A collection of this kind, a Library of general education, must be confined to moderate limits, and it necessarily omits many books of supreme beauty and value. Thus each nation in turn may miss many of its most popular and characteristic works. But one of the objects of the author was to counteract the exclusive spirit of nationality and the engrossing interest of modern times. An acquaintance with our national and modern authors is often purchased at the cost of entire ignorance of the noblest works of other ages and other languages. It was the main idea of this selection to awaken attention to the typical works of other nations and times, so as to bring out the essential elements that each has contributed in the life of Humanity. The *Library*, like the *Calendar*, of Comte is thoroughly representative; it seeks to impress on the mind of our age the characteristic qualities of various types of civilisation and of human energy and thought.

The standard of choice is not the absolute one of literary merit. Many an admirable work of genius is omitted, either because its place is otherwise filled or because, like *Pantagruel*, *Gulliver*, and *Don Juan*, it cannot be held to work for edification. On the other hand, some books are included, although not of the first rank of literary excellence, since they present us something indispensable and not otherwise found, or they conveniently collect a useful set of observations. It would have been contrary to the first object of a

collection, European in character and popular in its design, either to include books of mere local celebrity, or to omit the typical books of any leading nation.

The works in the first and the fourth sections only, the Poets and the Philosophers, retain permanent hold on mankind. Even in those sections the progress of literary culture may possibly modify judgments formed in Paris sixty years ago, especially in the department of the primitive poetry of Europe and of the East. Manuals of science and history, several of which appear in the second and third sections, are naturally in course of constant improvement; some of those mentioned in the list are already superseded by better, and others are quite obsolete. Scientific and historical text-books belong to special countries and separate generations and are easily found. But in the system of Comte the earliest works on science and history have a value of their own, as recording progress and keeping in sight the elements of the subject. It is the habit of our age to attach a rather exaggerated value to the latest novelty in research. Geometry, astronomy, physics, and chemistry are not really reconstructed anew every few years; and the editing of some neglected manuscripts does not amount to a revolution in historical knowledge.

It will be seen by those who take the trouble to study the now obsolete manuals which are found in the sections of Science and History, that they have a comprehensive and synthetic character which is very rarely met with in our analytic and specialising methods of study to-day. Books such as those of Fischer on *Physics*, of Richerand on *Physiology*, of Duméril on *Natural History*, or, again, Malte-Brun's *Geography*, Heeren's *Manuals*, and the like, though not now in use, and in many respects obsolete, are based upon systematic conceptions of their respective

subjects which are not often found in the modern text-books presenting an immense accumulation of special details.

Such a list as that of Comte would cease to have any use, it would indeed be full of mischief, if it were taken in any absolute or intolerant spirit. It appears from the *Calendar* and other writings of Comte, that the *Library* is not designed as a comparative judgment of authors, or as necessarily condemning those who are not included. The *Calendar* contains the names of more than ninety poets, of whom little more than fifty are found in the *Library*. The names of Euripides and Lucretius appear in the *Calendar*, as do those of Boccaccio, Chaucer, Rabelais, Bunyan, Swift, Lessing, Schiller, and Sterne ; but for various reasons their works are not recommended for constant perusal. Catullus is certainly superior as a poet to Tibullus, and Lucretius to Ovid ; but the subject and manner of those great poets may probably have seemed less suitable for general reading. Comte, it is clear, placed the highest value on the philosophic work of Plato, Aquinas, Hobbes, Vico, Montesquieu, Leibnitz, Kant, and Adam Smith ; and in science on that of Kepler, Galileo, Harvey, Newton, and D'Alembert ; but there are good reasons why their writings, however indispensable to human thought, should not be included in any educational list. On the other hand, compilations like those of Malte-Brun, Rienzi, Heeren, Richerand, Duméril, Fischer, Meckel, Carr, and Graham have no great merit, nor any permanent value.

The Catalogue as a whole is intended as a type of what a synthetic view of education requires, and as a summary of the best that exists in various languages and ages. Few men living would feel themselves competent to prepare a selected Library in all depart-

ments of science and literature, of all ages and languages. M. Pierre Laffitte has declined to revise or complete the list; and the present editor has no intention of undertaking the task. A few explanatory notes, with remarks as to translations and editions, have been added. The editor has received a considerable body of information from M. Laffitte, the friend and disciple of Comte, as to the works which he mainly had in view where the name of a voluminous author is given alone. Many notes and memoranda in Comte's handwriting exist in his library, and from these in some cases the selections have been given here. In other cases the authority is the recollection of M. Laffitte, or his own belief, derived from his continual intercourse with Comte, of what it was his intention to recommend for habitual use.

Note

The following list is taken from the fourth volume of Comte's *Politique Positive*, 1854. It is the only list published by Comte himself. In the editor's notes will be found such additions or omissions as were introduced after Comte's death from memoranda left by him. The books indicated were in some cases described by Comte under a general title. In this edition a translation of the actual title has been given. In the third section, that of History, for some unknown reason, the works were given in inverse chronological order, although in the other parts of the *Library*, in the *Calendar*, and in all of Comte's historical writings, the chronological order is observed. It has been restored in this translation. Comte's own view of the *Library* is set forth in *Pos. Pol.* iv. 236, 351-353. This, and all other references to the

Positive Polity, are taken from the English translation, 4 vols. (Longmans), 1875.

When the date of a book is given, it is the date of the first publication. Where several dates are given, they indicate the editions and translations.

"*Var. Ed.*" (Various editions) means that the book is common and has been often reprinted. "*Rare*" means comparatively rare to the ordinary reader, or not to be obtained without search. Of the older books and translations, copies can only be occasionally met with, often at very low prices. But nearly all the books in this list are commonly to be seen on the shelves of the book-dealers in London and Paris. The date will usually indicate the probability of finding a book in ordinary circulation.

The well-known series of Bohn's Libraries (G. Bell & Sons) contains nearly all of these works, mostly translations.

The series of the Chandos Classics (Warne & Co.) contains very many of the works.

Many of the others will be found in the Globe series (Macmillan), and in the cheap Libraries issued by Messrs. Cassell, Ward & Lock, Dent, and Routledge, by the Oxford and Cambridge Universities, and very many other series, as in Lord Avebury's collection of the Best Hundred Books.

AUGUSTE COMTE'S POSITIVIST LIBRARY FOR THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

(*Published in* 1851)

Part I. Poetry and Fiction

Homer.	The *Iliad*, and the *Odyssey*.
Æschylus.	The Seven *Tragedies*.
Sophocles.	The *King Œdipus*.
Aristophanes.	The *Comedies*.
Pindar.	The *Triumphal Odes*.
Theocritus.	The *Idylls*.
Longus.	The *Daphnis and Chloe*.
Plautus.	The *Comedies*.
Terence.	The *Comedies*.
Virgil.	The *Poems* complete.
Horace.	Selections—(The *Odes*).
Lucan.	*Pharsalia*.
Ovid.	(*Metamorphoses*, and *Fasti*.)
Tibullus.	The *Elegies*.
Juvenal.	The *Satires*.
Tales of the Middle Ages.	*Fabliaux du Moyen Age*, by Legrand d'Aussy.
Dante.	(*Divina Commedia*.)
Ariosto.	(*Orlando Furioso*.)
Tasso.	(*Gerusalemme Liberata*.)
Petrarch.	Selections—(The *Sonnets*).
Metastasio.	A Selection from the *Dramas*.
Alfieri.	A Selection from the *Dramas*.
Manzoni.	The *Betrothed* (*Promessi Sposi*).
Cervantes.	*Don Quixote*.
	The Exemplary Novels.

Spanish Dramas.	(A Collection of Twenty Dramas by Calderon, Lope de Vega, and others. *Coleccion Selecta del Antiquo Teatro Español*, by José Segundo Florez. Paris, 1854.)
The Cid.	(The national Epic of old Spain.)
Spanish National Ballads.	(A Selection.)
Corneille.	A Selection from the *Dramas*.
Molière.	The *Comedies* complete.
Racine.	A Selection from the *Dramas*.
Voltaire.	A Selection from the *Dramas*.
La Fontaine.	*Fables in Verse*.
La Motte.	Some selected *Fables*.
Florian.	Some selected *Fables*.
Le Sage.	*Gil Blas*.
Madame de la Fayette.	*The Princess of Cleves*.
Bernardin de Saint Pierre.	*Paul and Virginia*.
Chateaubriand.	*The Martyrs*, *The Last of the Abencerages*.
Shakespeare.	A Selection from the *Dramas*.
Milton.	*Paradise Lost*, the *Lyrical Poems*.
De Foe.	*Robinson Crusoe*.
Goldsmith.	*The Vicar of Wakefield*.
Fielding.	*Tom Jones*.
Walter Scott.	*Ivanhoe*, *Quentin Durward*, *Fair Maid of Perth*, *Legend of Montrose*, *Old Mortality*, *Heart of Mid-Lothian*, *The Antiquary*.
Byron.	Selected *Poems*, excluding *Don Juan*.
Goethe.	Selected *Poems*.
The Arabian Nights.	

Part II. Science

Condorcet.	*The Art of Calculating* (*Arithmetic*).
Clairaut.	*Algebra*, and *Geometry*.
Lacroix, or Legendre.	*Trigonometry*.
Descartes.	*Geometry*.
A. Comte.	*Analytic Geometry*.
Poinsot.	*Statics*, and *Memoirs on Mechanics*.
Carnot.	*Infinitesimal Calculus*.
Navier.	*Transcendental Analysis* (Polytechnic School).
	Course of Mechanics (Polytechnic School).
Carnot.	*Principles of Equilibrium and of Motion*.
Lagrange.	*Theory of Analytic Functions*.
A. Comte.	*Popular Astronomy*.
Fontenelle.	*The Plurality of Worlds*.
Fischer.	*Physics*, translated and annotated by Biot.
J. Carr.	*Synopsis of Practical Philosophy*.
Lavoisier.	*Elements of Chemistry*.
Berthollet.	*Statical Chemistry*.
T. Graham.	*Elements of Chemistry*.
Meckel.	*Manual of Anatomy*.
Bichat.	*On Life and Death*.
	General Anatomy.
Blainville.	*On the Organization of Animals*. Vol. I.
Richerand.	*Physiology*, annotated by Berard.
Cl. Bernard.	*Physiological Researches*.
Segond.	*Systematization of Biology*.
	General Anatomy.
Barthez.	*New Elements of the Science of Man*. (Second edition, 1806.)
Lamarck.	*The Philosophy of Zoology*.
Duméril.	*Elements of Natural Science*.

Buffon.	*Natural History of Animals.*
Hippocrates.	*On Airs, Waters, and Places.*
Hufeland.	*Art of Prolonging Human Life.*
Cornaro.	*On a Sober Life.*
Broussais.	*Notes on Questions of Pathology.*
	History of Chronic Inflammations.
Fontenelle and Condorcet.	*Estimates of Men of Science.*

Part III. History

Malte-Brun.	*Universal Geography.*
Rienzi.	*Geographical Dictionary.*
Cook.	*Three voyages round the World.*
Chardin.	*Travels in the East.*
Barthelemy.	*Travels of Anacharsis.*
Heeren.	*Manual of Ancient History.*
Herodotus.	*History.*
Thucydides.	*History of the Peloponnesian War.*
Arrian.	*Life of Alexander.*
Cæsar.	*Commentaries.*
Tacitus.	*Complete Works.*
Plutarch.	*Lives.*
Winckelmann.	*History of the Art of Antiquity.*
Gibbon.	*Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.*
Fleury.	*Ecclesiastical History.*
Hallam.	*Middle Ages in Europe.*
Heeren.	*Political System of Europe.*
Hume.	*History of England.*
Robertson.	*History of Charles V.*
Ascargorta.	*Short History of Spain.*
Denina.	*The Revolutions of Italy.*
Bossuet.	*History of France.*
P. de Comines.	*Memoirs.*
Benvenuto Cellini.	*Memoirs of his Life.*
L. da Vinci.	*Treatise on Painting.*
Cromwell.	*The Life of.*

Richelieu.	*Political Testament.*
Madame de Motteville.	*Memoirs* (*from* 1615-1666).
Voltaire.	*Age of Louis XIV.*
Grétry.	*Memoirs on Music.*
Mignet.	*History of the French Revolution.*

Part IV. Philosophy and Religion

Aristotle.	The *Politics* and the *Ethics.*
The Bible.	Complete.
The Koran.	Complete.
St. Augustin.	*The City of God.*
	The Confessions.
	Treatise on the Sermon on the Mount.
St. Bernard.	*On the Love of God* (*De Diligendo Deo*).
Thomas à Kempis.	*The Imitation of Christ.*
Corneille.	*Paraphrase in Verse of the Imitation of Christ.*
Bossuet.	*The Doctrine of the Catholic Church.*
	History of Protestant Divergencies.
Pouget.	*The Montpellier Catechism.*
Bacon.	*Novum Organum.*
Descartes.	*Discourse on Method.*
Diderot.	*Interpretation of Nature.*
Pascal.	*The Thoughts.*
Vauvenargues.	*The Reflexions.*
Madame de Lambert.	*Advice of a Mother to her Son.*
	Advice of a Mother to her Daughter.
Bossuet.	*Sketch of Universal History.*
Condorcet.	*Progress of the Human Understanding.*
Bossuet.	*Policy drawn from Scripture.*
De Maistre.	*The Pope.*
Diderot.	*Letter on the Blind.*
	Letter on the Deaf and Dumb.
Hume.	*Essays.*
Adam Smith.	*Philosophical Reflections on the History of Astronomy.*

DIDEROT.	*The Beautiful.* (Article *Le Beau* in the Encyclopædia.)
BARTHEZ.	*The Theory of the Beautiful.*
CABANIS.	*Relations of the Physical and the Moral in Man.*
LEROY.	*Letters on Animals.*
GALL.	*The Functions of the Brain.*
BROUSSAIS.	*Irritation and Madness.* (First edition.)
A. COMTE.	*Positive Philosophy.* (Translated and condensed by Miss Martineau.)
	Positive Polity.
	Positivist Catechism.

COMMENTARY BY FREDERIC HARRISON

(*Published in* 1886)

PART I. POETRY AND FICTION

This section includes Poetry and Fiction, both ancient and modern. It is arranged in languages—Greek, Latin, Italian, Spanish, French, English, and German—apparently in order of time. It embraces epic, lyric, and dramatic poetry, besides fables and romances.

The list of the ancient authors includes nearly all those of first-rate merit. In the *Calendar* we find also the names of the ancient poets, Hesiod, Tyrtæus, Sappho, Anacreon, Euripides, Æsop, Menander, Phædrus, Lucian, Ennius, and Lucretius. Euripides is probably omitted from the *Library*, in spite of his popularity, as inferior to Sophocles, and still more to Æschylus, but mainly as the first of the line of the literary sceptics or revolutionists—*Pos. Pol.* iii. 239. The unbounded admiration that Comte felt for Homer,

Æschylus, and Virgil is expressed *Pos. Pol.* iii. 235-239, 315. Of these three he recommends the entire surviving works. Pindar represents the entire lyric poetry of Greece, and Aristophanes its comedy. The *Daphnis and Chloe*, by Longus in the fifth century, represents the immense persistence of Greek religion and poetry, even under the official establishment of Christianity. In spite of its erotic character, it retains some of the pure qualities of the Greek idyll; and its immense popularity at the Renascence in Europe gives it a special historical importance in the history of poetry. It connects the modern with antique romance, through the old French translation by Amyot in 1559.

In Latin poetry the entire works of Virgil are recommended. It is believed that of Ovid the works intended are the *Metamorphoses* and the *Fasti*, which illustrate so profoundly the religion of Polytheism; of Horace, the *Odes*, his chief masterpiece. Lucretius, who is now recognised as in the first rank of poetic genius, is probably omitted from this list from the metaphysical and sceptical spirit which pervades the extraordinary work of this great man, and which may seem unfitted for constant reading of a popular kind. No reason is known for the exclusion of Catullus and the admission of Tibullus, whom modern criticism recognises to be quite inferior to Catullus. The omission is perhaps owing to this, that Catullus was but imperfectly understood in France sixty years ago, when modern research had not yet explained the obscurities or settled the text of these exquisite lyrics.

Of the early mediæval romances and epics, the *Cid* is the only one that appears in this list, except so far as fragments of others are found in the *Fabliaux* of Legrand d'Aussy. The *Nibelungen*, *Roland*, the *Fox*, *Beowulf*, and *Arthur* were comparatively unknown

when the list was framed. Comte read and quoted the *Decameron* of Boccaccio, who has a place in the *Calendar* with the Troubadours and Chaucer; but he has not placed their works in the *Library*. The *Fabliaux du Moyen Age*, short tales in verse, giving a satirical picture of society in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, were collected, condensed, and translated into modern French prose by Legrand d'Aussy in 1779. The augmented edition of this, with other mediæval romances, by Renouard (1829), 5 vols. 8vo, is expensive and not easily found. It has the misfortune to be classed with what collectors call *facetiæ*. A new edition, in the original old French verse, has recently been edited by MM. A. de Montaiglon and G. Raynaud (6 vols., Paris, 1872-86). Some of the tales have been translated into English verse by Way and Ellis, 1796-1800. There is a prose version of select tales by W. Carew Hazlitt, 1873.

Of the modern poets and romancists the following appear in the *Calendar*, but not in the *Library*, viz. Boccaccio, Chaucer, Rabelais, Swift, Camoens, Spenser, Bunyan, Burns, Shelley, Klopstock, Gessner, Lessing, Otway, Vondel, Schiller, Sterne, Richardson, Miss Edgeworth, Madame de Staël, Elisa Mercœur, Fenimore Cooper.

It is believed that Comte intended to indicate of Dante the *Divina Commedia*, of Ariosto the *Orlando Furioso*, of Tasso the *Gerusalemme Liberata*, and of Petrarch the *Sonnets*. Comte's own daily reading consisted of passages from the *Imitation*, and from Dante, his estimate of whom is to be found *Pos. Pol.* iii. 460. His estimate of Ariosto and Tasso is in *Pos. Pol.* iii. 485. There is now a complete and admirable version of the *Divine Comedy* into literal English prose; the *Hell*, by Dr. John Carlyle (1849, 1867); the *Hell*,

the *Purgatory*, and *Paradise*, by A. J. Butler (1880, 1885); also the *Purgatory* by W. S. Dugdale (Bohn); and very many others in prose and verse. There is also a complete translation into archaic French prose by Lamennais (1856), and a crowd of verse translations, amongst which Cary (1814) still retains the pre-eminence, in spite of the merits of many others.

Ariosto and Tasso are now little read in England; but it may be remembered that Hallam says, "Ariosto has been, after Homer, the favourite poet of Europe;" and again, "The Jerusalem is the great epic poem of modern times." Both have been translated in the seventeenth, and again in the eighteenth century. Metastasio, who is now little read, was called by Rousseau "the one poet of the heart;" his immense popularity contributed not a little to the classical enthusiasm of the eighteenth century. It is probable that the dramas to which Comte directs our attention were chiefly the attempts to idealise Roman history, such as *Clelia*, *Regulus*, *Scipio*, *Cato*, *Titus*, *Hadrian*, *Aetius*. Metastasio is frequently cited by Comte, who in the *Calendar* prefers him to Alfieri, apparently on the ground of his superior tenderness and deeper social interests. Of the plays, the *Clemency of Titus*, translated by Hoole, is the most famous and the most important. The dramas of Alfieri intended are probably those concerned with ancient history and legend, such as *Antigone*, *Alcestis*, *Timoleon*, *Virginia*, *Octavia*, *Rosmunda*. The *Betrothed* of Manzoni was regarded by Comte as an idealisation of the better type of the Catholic priesthood. It has enjoyed an enormous popularity in Italy, and has been frequently translated.

Of the *Cid*, the national poem of Spain, there is an excellent translation into French prose by Damas Hinard, Paris, 4to, 1858 (rare), and a condensed translation in verse in a little volume by John Ormsby

(1879). Lockhart's *Spanish Ballads* is a common and well-known book, and also Southey's combined prose version of the *Chronicle*, *Poem*, and *Ballads* of the *Cid*. There is a similar French version of the three separately by St. Albin, Paris, 2 vols. (1865). There is also an excellent little volume of the *Cid Ballads* by G. Dennis (1845).

Comte's estimate of *Don Quixote* may be seen *Pos. Pol.* iii. 345, 486. The new translation by J. Ormsby, 4 vols. 8vo (1885), is the first critical edition and version of this great work. Now also by Fitzmaurice Kelly (1896).

The collection of Spanish Dramas in this list is a volume published by J. S. Florez, Paris (1854), *Coleccion Selecta*, etc. The selection was made by Comte himself. The volume contains twenty dramas by eleven poets. The complete list of its contents is as follows :—

Teatro Español Escojido. (Garnier Frères, Paris.)

Calderon.	*A secreto agravio secreta venganza.*
	El Alcalde de Zalamea.
	La Vida es sueño.
	No siempre lo peor es cierto.
	Mañanas de abril y mayo.
	La Nave del mercader.
	La Viña del Señor.
Lope de Vega.	*Las flores de Don Juan.*
	El perro del hortolano.
	Los locos de Valencia.
Alarcon.	*La Verdad sospechosa.*
	Las Paredes oyen.
Tirso de Molina.	*La Prudencia en la Muger.*
Rojas.	*Garcia del Castañar.*
Moreto.	*El valiente Justiciero.*
Guillen de Castro.	*Los mal casados de Valencia.*
Guevara.	*Reinar despues de morir.*

MONTALVAN.	*No hay vida como la honra.*
MATOS FRAGOSO.	*El carbonero de Toledo.*
MORATIN.	*El Si de las Niñas.*

Of these plays, the second and the third of Calderon's have been admirably translated into English.

The following lists of the selected dramas of Corneille, Racine, and Voltaire are taken from the MSS. memoranda left by Comte. The plays are apparently chosen for their historical interest :—

CORNEILLE.	Thirteen dramas, viz. : — *Le Cid, Horace, Cinna, Polyeucte, Pompée, Rodogune, Héraclius Empéreur, Nicomède, Pertharite, Œdipe, Sertorius, Othon, Pulchérie.*
RACINE.	Seven dramas, viz. :—*Andromaque, Les Plaideurs, Britannicus, Bajazet, Iphigénie, Phèdre, Athalie.*
VOLTAIRE.	Nine dramas, viz. :—*Brutus, Zaïre, Alzire, Mérope, Sémiramis, Oreste, Rome Sauvée, L'Orphelin de la Chine, Tancrède.*

Many of these are probably selected, not so much for their poetic value, as to render familiar diverse national types and historical personages.

Of Molière the entire range of the comedies is included expressly. For the French poets, see *Pos. Pol.* iii. 486.

On the art of Fables Comte placed a very high estimate, see *Pos. Pol.* iii. 234. No reason is assigned for the omission of the ancient masters of this art. Æsop, Phædrus, and Pilpay are all in the *Calendar*. The European reputation of La Fontaine makes him the representative of this school; Florian and La Motte are little known out of France. They are,

with B. de St. Pierre, the only writers in this section whose names do not appear in the *Calendar*. *Paul and Virginia* has enjoyed a world-wide reputation, though it is little to our present English taste. The *Princess of Cleves*, by Madame de la Fayette (1678), had an extraordinary effect in the seventeenth century, and was repeatedly translated. It was no doubt the original source of the romance of the feelings, and of that "women's poetry" in romance which in our day has been so prolific. Chateaubriand and Manzoni, who for us are completely overshadowed by Scott, represent for Catholicism, and for France and Italy, the same growth of the historical romance which Scott represents for Protestantism and England. *Pos. Pol.* iii. 527.

The plays of Shakespeare intended by Comte are, according to his MSS. memoranda, the following eleven dramas :—

Shakespeare.	*Tempest, Twelfth Night, Merchant of Venice, Winter's Tale, Macbeth, Lear, Romeo and Juliet, Hamlet, Othello, Coriolanus, Henry VIII.*

This selection is evidently based on the estimate that we find in *Pos. Pol.* iii. 486. He regards Shakespeare's historical dramas as inadequate presentations of the past. They are in almost all instances inferior to the dramas of character and passion, and they are not the result of any genuine historical interest or knowledge. *Julius Cæsar*, the most impressive of them, is obviously omitted by Comte as being based on a view too favourable to the murderers and to an act which Comte uniformly treats as "an unparalleled crime," *Pos. Pol.* iii. 328. He inserts the far inferior play of *Coriolanus*, as being more true to Roman history. No explanation is given for the admission of the doubtful

play of *Henry VIII.* Comte possibly regarded it as a faithful idealisation of the remarkable historical movement which he describes, *Pos. Pol.* iii. 473—the subjection of the Spiritual to the Temporal Power in Europe. See to the same effect, Schlegel, *Dramatic Literature.* Any complete list of Shakespeare's masterpieces would include *Measure for Measure*, *As you Like It*, *Henry IV.*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and *Cymbeline.* The rest we value chiefly for their exquisite scenes, and their magnificent passages and incomparable creations, but not as perfect and complete dramas, such as *Hamlet*, *Lear*, and *Othello* are.

Milton's great poem was regarded by Comte "as the highest measure yet reached of our poetic powers," although this "inimitable poem" was produced under most unfavourable conditions, *Pos. Pol.* iii. 487. The "*Lyrical Poems*" probably include *Lycidas*, *Il Penseroso*, *L'Allegro*, and, possibly, *Comus.*

The romances of Scott are evidently chosen from the historical point of view, and are arranged in strict chronological order, see *Pos. Pol.* i. 245; iii. 527. All editions of the *Library* published by Comte himself give *Quentin Durward* as the second on the list. Later, he thought it unjust to the memory of Louis XI., who holds so high a place in the *Calendar*, and he suggested in MS. the substitution of *Waverley.* He seems to have omitted the exquisite *Bride of Lammermoor*, on the ground that Lucy Ashton betrays a weakness of character unworthy of her sex. Comte always regarded Scott as one of the great creative minds of the world, and as the last of those of the first rank.

No selections have been found as to the poems of Byron and Goethe intended by Comte. The references to Byron, *Pos. Pol.* i. 239, 274, etc., etc., apparently point to *Childe Harold* and the *Dramas*,

especially *Manfred* and *Cain*. *Don Juan*, Byron's distinctive literary work, is specially excluded, not only for its immoral tendency, but for its deliberate aim to dishonour the highest attributes of Man and of Woman. This is a thing quite different from the animalism of Longus and Theocritus, or the grossness of Aristophanes, the *Fabliaux*, or *Tom Jones*. It is a cynical attempt to ridicule virtue. And this exclusion forms a signal example of Comte's habit to make literary genius subordinate to religious purpose.

Of Goethe the pieces intended are *Faust*, certainly and mainly, and some of the historical plays, probably, viz. *Goetz*, *Egmont*, *Tasso*, *Iphigeneia*. Goethe represents in Germany much of the same movement towards true historical idealisation that Scott introduced into England, Chateaubriand into France, and Manzoni into Italy. But in the *Calendar* he precedes Calderon ; and this undoubtedly points to *Faust* as his typical work. Schiller, who in the *Calendar* holds the same position with regard to Corneille, along with Racine, Voltaire, and Metastasio, does not appear in the *Library*.

Part II. Science

Most of the books in this class are well known and quite common ; their chief value is as illustrating the history of the sciences. Some few of them, like Descartes' *Geometry* and Guglielmini on *Rivers*, are rare ; some of the manuals are quite obsolete, and others are old text-books long ago superseded. The following will be found only after a search in London or Paris : The *Analytic Geometry* of Comte, the *Geometry* of Descartes (1634) in French, the works of Navier, Carnot, Lavoisier, Segond, Lamarck, Guglielmini. The compilations of Fischer, Carr, Graham, Meckel, Richerand, and Duméril, useful manuals forty

years ago, are now practically obsolete, and will only be met with occasionally on bookstalls.

It will be remembered that Comte was a philosopher, and not, except in mathematics, a scientific specialist. He did not continue the study of the special sciences after the publication of the third volume of his *Positive Philosophy* in 1838. The list in Part II., therefore, necessarily represents in the main the state of physical knowledge about seventy years ago. Since that date, entire new departments of special science have been created. Such are Electrology, Molecular Physics, Acoustics, Spectrum Analysis, Embryology, and the whole of the discoveries relating to the Persistence of Energy and to Physical Evolution. At that date, the discoveries of none of the following were published: Darwin, Helmholtz, Kirchhoff, Dumas, Pasteur, or Sir W. Thomson. This part of Comte's catalogue, therefore, has a philosophical and historical value, not one strictly scientific. For a summary of the present state of scientific knowledge we must have recourse to a totally different set of books, and to recent compilations in current use. It will, however, be a useful hint to select current text-books which most nearly correspond to the scheme of those here mentioned.

On the other hand, many of the books in this part contain the original thoughts of some of those who have most influenced their respective sciences. Others, again, were excellent *résumés* of scientific laws of a general kind before they were overladen with special observations. It is clear from Comte's general writings that he attached permanent value to the works of the following, all of whom are in the *Calendar*, viz. Descartes, Fontenelle, Lagrange, Lavoisier, Bichat, Condorcet, Lamarck, Blainville, Buffon, Broussais, Berthollet, Clairaut, and Hippocrates. These have not only an historical, but a philosophical value.

Translations into English may be found of most of the works in this Part. *The Art of Counting* by Condorcet and the *Geometry* of Clairaut have been recently translated by Dr. Kaines. Thomas Carlyle translated Legendre's *Trigonometry* (1824). Dr. Burnell printed in 1881 the Treatise of Hippocrates on *Airs, Waters, and Places*, with the Greek text, and Latin, French, and English versions in parallel columns. The works of Navier, Fischer, Lagrange, Blainville, Segond, Lamarck, Barthez, and Duméril, do not appear to be accessible in English. The *Estimates of Men of Science* (*Eloges des Savants*), by Fontenelle and Condorcet, from 1699 to 1770, form the first and second volumes of the collected works of Fontenelle, and the second and third of the works of Condorcet. They were also published separately.

In the editions of the *Library* published after Comte's death, we find the *Physiology* of Claude Bernard omitted, no general work with that title having ever appeared; the work of Guglielmini *On the Nature of Rivers* (1697) and the *Aphorisms* of Hippocrates are added.

The progress of modern science has not equally affected all the text-books and manuals in this section. Those on Mathematics, Mechanics, and Astronomy practically retain their value; those on general and comparative Anatomy do so to some extent, and the descriptive Zoology slightly. But Electricity, Molecular Physics, and Embryology are practically unrepresented altogether. The Chemistry, the comparative and microscopic Biology, and the Theory of Physiological Development, are necessarily out of date. To those who will compare the manuals in Physics, Chemistry, and Biology here given with the most recent editions of manuals such as those of Ganot, Roscoe, Ramsay, Foster, Clerk-Maxwell, and others,

and with such treatises as those of Sir W. Thomson on *Natural Philosophy*, Professor Williamson on *Chemistry*, Sir R. Owen's *Comparative Physiology*, Cl. Bernard *On the Nervous System*, Charles Darwin on *Species*, and similar works, it will be at once obvious that new realms have since been added to science. The *Elements of Chemistry*, by Thomas Graham, published in 1850-1858 (revised edition), was a book of great value at that date. The *Synopsis of Practical Philosophy* (1828) was a manual of tables for the use of engineers, and is now seldom seen. It is not at first sight apparent what is intended by "*Les discours sur la nature des animaux, par Buffon.*" That is the title of the brilliant introductory chapter to Buffon's *Natural History of Quadrupeds*. M. Laffitte considers that what was intended is a selection of descriptions of animals from the *Histoire Naturelle*, such as that published by Didot, Paris, 1859, 12mo.

Part III. History

Of the historical section, something of the same kind must be said as of the scientific section. Of the manuals several are obsolete; some of the histories are already superseded; and the list does not give the means even of obtaining a continuous summary of all periods. The compilations of Malte-Brun and Rienzi are obsolete. The works of Heeren, Hallam, Winckelmann, and Grétry are not on the level of our present knowledge. And the histories of Mignet, Voltaire, Davila, Denina, Ascargorta, and Hume represent little more than lucid accounts of the principal events.

In the choice of histories, literary excellence has not been the guide. The object is evidently to select plain unvarnished narratives, as far as possible free from all prejudice of party, school, or religion. The

scheme of Social Dynamics contained in the fifth and sixth volumes of the *Pos. Phil.*, and in the third volume of the *Pos. Pol.*, states the theory of historical evolution generally, as it was conceived by Comte. The historical selection, therefore, is intended simply to convey a general idea of the past as a connected whole, and for this purpose the physical constitution of the planet, the variety of races and institutions, manners, and the arts, are equally considered. There is reason to suppose that Comte attached permanent value to the works of the following: De Comines, Bossuet, Robertson, Gibbon, Tacitus, Thucydides, Herodotus, Plutarch, Cæsar, and Arrian, all of whom are placed by him in the *Calendar*, as are also Cook, Benvenuto Cellini, Leonardo da Vinci, Cromwell, and Richelieu.

We should now use for manuals of geography such books as those of Guyot, Reclus, Freeman, Johnston, Spruner, etc. Rienzi's *Dictionary* has disappeared from use. Cook's *Voyages* evidently represent the Oceanic and Fetichist form of civilisation; Chardin's *Travels* (translated in Pinkerton's collection) represent the Asiatic and Mahometan form. It will be observed that the catalogue was complete before the appearance of the following works, which would probably now better serve the purposes of an English reader: Milman's *Latin Christianity*, Rawlinson's *Manual of Ancient History*, Green's *Short History of England*, Duruy's *History of France*, Guizot's *Life of Cromwell*, Gardiner and Firth on the Civil War, Merivale's *General History of Rome*, Freeman's *Historical Geography*. Most of the modern standard historical works are on a scale that is not compatible with such a list as the present. The following works, out of this part, are in Bohn's Library in English: Herodotus, Thucydides, Cæsar, Tacitus, De Comines, Cellini, Mignet,

Da Vinci. All the works in this part, except those of Ascargorta and Grétry, are accessible in English. In the editions published after Comte's death, we find added Davila's *History of the Civil Wars in France* (1630), a contemporary work of great and permanent value.

Part IV. Philosophy and Religion

The books in this Part may be divided into four classes :—

I. Theology, in its three main forms, Biblical, Mahometan, and Catholic. The rise and development of the Catholic faith is particularly represented.

II. The rise and development of Sociology in its two forms, Statical and Dynamical.

III. The rise and development of Ethics, ancient and modern.

IV. The synthesis proposed by Positivism.

Comte's estimate of these various philosophical and religious movements will be found fully set forth in the third volume of the *Polity*, in passages too numerous to be cited usefully. They can be easily found in the Table of Contents and in the Index.

The Part opens with the *Ethics* and *Politics* of Aristotle as the true foundation of scientific Sociology and Ethics (*Pos. Pol.* iii. 259-261). These are immediately followed by the *Bible* and the *Koran* entire, representing in the sum the Hebrew and the Islamic theology.

It will be observed that Christianity is represented only in its Catholic, not in its Protestant form. Protestantism, which in poetry and in history has full justice done to it both in the *Library*, the *Calendar*, and other writings of Comte, was looked on by him, from the purely religious point of view, as a destructive

and revolutionary movement, and all merely critical and revolutionary efforts have no place either in the *Library* or *Calendar*. Hence Protestantism, as a basis of social synthesis, is only represented by a work avowedly hostile, the *Variations* of Bossuet.

Catholicism is fully represented from the first conception of the Church as an organised society in the *City of God* of St. Augustin, to its highest point of development in the era of St. Bernard, and down to its decline in the epoch of Bossuet.

Descartes, Bacon, Diderot, and Condorcet represent the rise of the Positive method as applied first to physical, and ultimately to social, science.

The rise and germs of Sociology as a distinct science are represented by Bossuet's and Condorcet's two sketches of universal progress from the opposite points of view of the Catholic and the Revolutionary doctrines.

The works of Diderot, Leroy, Cabanis, Broussais, and Gall represent the foundation of moral and social science on the basis of a rational biology. It will be noticed that Gall's work on the *Functions of the Brain* is placed in this Fourth Part, as Philosophy, not in the Second Part, as Science. Comte regarded it, not as a work on Physiology, much less on Phrenology, but as a philosophical analysis of the moral and mental faculties of man.

In the editions published after Comte's death we find added the *Moral Reflections* of Cicero, Epictetus, and Marcus Aurelius. This represents the rise of Ethics as a distinct science amongst the ancients. Of Cicero the treatise *De Officiis*, *On Moral Duty*, may be principally intended. We also find added Duclos' *Considerations on the Manners of his Age* (1750), which he thought valuable as combining the idea of moral with social progress.

It will be remembered that the leading aim of the collection in this part is to familiarise the modern world with the history of man's moral and social development, and especially with the two great schemes anterior to the Positive—the Catholic and the Materialistic. In advising study of their works, he recommends the theories of the one as little as the other; those of Bossuet and De Maistre, as little as those of Diderot and Cabanis. The *Montpellier Catechism* is not imposed on us any more than the *Koran*. A knowledge of the great factors in the development of religion is indispensable to progress. Positivism professes to reconcile and harmonise them all.

EDITIONS AND TRANSLATIONS

PART I. POETRY AND FICTION

HOMER. *Iliad.* [Verse.]

Chapman, 1596-1611, *var. ed.*, and 1857, 1875, 2 vols. 8vo.

Pope, 1720, *var. ed.*, and in *Chandos Classics*.

Cowper, 1791, *var. ed.*

Lord Derby, 1864, 2 vols. 8vo, *var. ed.*, and 1867, 2 vols. 12mo.

[Prose.]

Lang, Leaf, E. Myers, 1883, 12mo.

Odyssey. [Verse.]

Chapman, 1615, *var. ed.*, and 1857, 1875, 2 vols. 12mo.

P. Worsley, 1861, 2 vols. 8vo.

Cowper, 1791, *var. ed.*

[Prose.]

Butcher and Lang, London, 1879, 12mo.

ÆSCHYLUS. [Verse.]

E. D. A. Morshead. The House of Atreus, London, 1881, 12mo; *Agamemnon, Libation-Bearers*, and *Furies*, 1881.

The Suppliant Maidens, London, 1883, 12mo.

Miss Swanwick. Tragedies, 1873, 2 vols. 8vo; also *var. ed.*, and *Bohn Cl. Libr.*

Milman. The Agammenon, 1865, 8vo.

R. Browning. Do. 1877, 8vo.

L. Campbell, 1890.

[Prose.]

A. W. Verrall, 1893.

SOPHOCLES. *Œdipus King.* [Verse.]

E. D. A. Morshead, 1885, 12mo.

Prof. Campbell, 1883; G. Murray, 1910.

[Prose.]

Jebb, 1883.

ARISTOPHANES. [Verse.]

Frere. Five Comedies, 1839, *rare*; and in collected works, 2 vols. 8vo, 1872, *rare. Acharnians, Knights, Birds, Frogs, Peace.*

T. Mitchell, 1820, 2 vols., *rare. Acharnians, Knights, Clouds, Wasps.*

B. B. Rogers, 1867-78, 1912.

Cumberland, 1812. *Clouds, Plutus, Frogs, Birds.* (*Lysistrata, Thesmophoriazusæ*, not in verse.)

PINDAR. [Prose.]

Ernest Myers, 1874, 8vo.

F. A. Paley, 1868, 8vo.

[Verse.]

Cary, 1844, 8vo.

A. Moore, 1822, 8vo, and see *Bohn Cl. Libr.*

T. C. Baring, 1875.

THEOCRITUS. [Prose.]

Andrew Lang, 1880, 8vo.

[Verse.]

C. S. Calverley, 1869, 8vo; 2nd ed., 1883, 8vo.

Bohn Cl. Libr.

LONGUS. *Daphnis and Chloe.*
Amyot, 1559 (French), amended and revised by Paul Louis Courier, 1810; *var. ed.*, published by Glady, in London, 1878, *rare.*
Rev. R. Smith (English), *Bohn Cl. Libr.*

PLAUTUS. *Comedies.* [Verse.]
Bonnell Thornton and Colman, 1767, *rare.*
[Prose.]
Bohn Cl. Libr.

TERENCE. *Comedies.* [Verse.]
Colman, 1765, 4to, *rare*; *var. ed.*, 1810, 1841, 12mo.
[Prose.]
Bohn Cl. Libr.

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